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Reclaiming China's Duanwu

Two girls in *hanfu* learn to make *zongzi*, a symbol of Duanwu, the Dragon Boat Festival.

The festival, which falls on May 5 of Chinese lunar calendar, became a national holiday last year. Authorities in Hubei Province, origin of the poet Qu Yuan, for whom Duanwu is celebrated, submitted an application to UNESCO to nominate China's Duanwu for "Intangible Culture Heritage" status.

The move comes four years after South Korea registered a similar festivity, which touched off massive debates over the festival's origin.

Korea's success made many Chinese worry about whether UNESCO would accept the Dragon Boat Festival. But Jiang Qinghe, director of Intangible Culture Heritage Protection Center of Hubei Province, said the celebrations are totally different in China and South Korea.

Jiang said the Chinese should feel pressured, as there is much "left to do to protect and promote" the tradition, and South Korea's success at claiming a Chinese festival as its own intangible heritage should be a lesson for all countries engaged in cultural preservation.

China's application includes four parts: the Duanwu customs in Qu Yuan's hometown in Zigui county, Hubei Province; the boat race in Huangshi, Hubei; Duanwu customs on the banks of Miluo river in Hunan Province; and Duanwu customs in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province.

CFP Photo

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find job crunch
spares none

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Foreign firms encouraged to open headquarters in Beijing

By Han Manman

The Beijing government announced Tuesday a new set of preferential policies for multinational companies that set up their regional headquarters in the capital.

According to the new rules, which take effect next month, foreign companies and those from Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan that set up their regional headquarters in Beijing will enjoy preferential rent policies and receive financial aid from the city during their start-up.

"The regulations will provide privileges in taxation and foreign exchange for foreign workers. We want to attract more multinational companies to invest in Beijing," said Chen Guangming, committee member of the Beijing Municipal Commission of Devel-

opment and Reform.

According to the regulations, foreign multinational corporations with registered capital of US \$10 million (68 million yuan) or more in China can establish regional headquarters in the capital. The previous figure set in 1999 was US \$30 million.

It also allows regional headquarters in Beijing to expand their operational and business areas, boost imports and exports and expand distribution and logistics within China.

Regional headquarters registered or set up after January 1, 2009 in Beijing, with a registered capital more than 100 million yuan, will be given subsidies for three years.

Headquarters whose annual sales break 100 million yuan for the first time will receive an

encouragement bonus.

The purpose is "to improve the functions of the regional headquarters and promote the development of finance, insurance, trade, accounting and legal systems in Beijing," Chen said.

New rules on entry and exit were published to improve the working and living conditions of foreign workers.

High-level managers and technicians can apply for a multiple-entry visa valid for up to five years; mid-level ones can apply for a multiple-entry visa valid up to three years, and common workers can apply for the visa for up to one year.

These three employee categories can apply for residence permits valid no longer than 5, 4 or 3 years, respectively.

Regional headquarters in need of office space can receive financial support for three years. A trial project is underway in Chaoyang District. If senior managers need to enroll their children to local kindergartens, primary or secondary schools, the government of the district or county in which the regional headquarters are located will make arrangements.

For Asia-Pacific headquarters, Singapore and Hong Kong have long been favored for their Western conveniences, widespread use of English and ease of doing business.

With China's large and growing domestic market, the advantages of mainland cities are becoming a consideration for multinational companies selecting an Asian headquarters.

CBD area extends east

By Jin Zhu

CBD area will be extended east to East Fourth Ring Road, north to Chaoyang North Road and east of the Tonghui River for 3 square kilometers, according to an announcement by the Beijing Central Business District (CBD) Administrative Committee.

The extension will allow CBD to keep its position while making room for new international finance and top businesses affairs centers.

The government will spend 7 billion yuan to develop its infrastructure over the next 10 years.

Beijing CBD was approved by the State Council in 1992, and at that time was a 10.4-square-kilometer area with an almost 4-square-kilometer core and 6.4-square-kilometer reserve.

So far, 80 percent of the projects – buildings, infrastructure and "green work" – are complete. Some buildings have become well-known parts of the cityscape like the China World Trade Center, Yintai Center and the Twin Towers.

The current area is located in Chaoyang District, between Chaoyang Road and Jianguomen-Wai Avenue north to south, and from Xi Da Wang Road and Dong Da Qiao Road east to west.

"CBD's development is already saturated," Liu Chuncheng, director of the Beijing CBD Administrative Committee, told the *Beijing Times* earlier this year.

According to the widening plan, 40 percent of the extended area, which occupies about 120 to 130 hectares, can be used for renovation and reconstruction.

"The investment will go to infrastructure facilities, such as road projects and green work. Some new roads will be extended east and become the main roads from east to west to ease traffic pressure," Liu said.

The plan would also place new top-level international office buildings, luxury business hotels and top business centers in the expansion.

"CBD should have an overall plan for the area and make preparations for industries that are likely to have a bright future," Liu said.

CBD was originally intended to be an organic life space with cultural amusements and shopping centers.

Expert: Precedent in Shanghai

By Huang Daohen

Preferential policies for transnational regional headquarters is one way Chinese cities try to lure foreign investment, Zhao Xiao, an economics professor at the University of Science and Technology Beijing, said.

The new regulations will prove

more attractive than previous provisions, Zhao said, citing Shanghai as an example.

Shanghai lowered its registered capital threshold for transnational regional headquarters last August.

"The policies turned out to be a success later as more multina-

tionalists flocked to Shanghai for the relaxed rules," he said.

Zhao said now it is the capital's turn. "The city attaches great importance to optimizing the investment environment and attracting more multinational companies to establish regional head-

quarters," he said.

So far, 121 regional headquarters of multinational companies are located in Beijing.

Shanghai is one of the cities with the most regional headquarters of multinational companies on the Chinese mainland.

Police take time out for Duanwu with international students



By Jin Zhu

Police from the exit-entry administration of the Public Security Bureau in Shunyi visited a local international school to share with students zongzi, traditional pyramid-shaped dumplings, in celebration of the Dragon Boat Festival on May 27.

CFP Photo

Skyscrapers a hazard, city's fire department says

By Jin Zhu

The Municipal Fire Department has stressed the urgent need to improve fire safety in the city after finishing an investigation into hidden dangers in city buildings which began with the burning of a hotel at CCTV's new location in February.

The capital has 8,592 high-rise buildings, 58 of which are skyscrapers more than 100 meters tall. According to the report, these high-rises are concentrated in Xicheng, Chaoyang,

Haidian and Fengtai districts.

"High-rise buildings usually have more than 10 floors or are over 24 meters tall. This leaves them vulnerable to a 'stack effect.' When fire breaks out, it spreads quickly and causes low visibility throughout the building," Tan Linfeng, director of the Fire Prevention Division at Beijing Municipal Fire Department, said.

Dense population is one problem, but more seriously, the city's tallest aerial ladder can only reach 90 meters. There is no way to rescue

people when a fire begins in a 300-meter-tall skyscraper, Tan said.

"Although the Fire Department plans to purchase helicopters, these rescue methods are limited by weather and environment," he said.

"At present, rescue relies on indoor dispersal, such as by applying refractory paint to the steel structure in Yintai Center to avoid collapse," he said.

According to statistics from Fire Bureau of the Ministry of Public Security, the country has nearly

98,000 high-rise buildings, 1,154 of which are taller than 100 meters.

"High-rises may be an attractive way to save space and land, but they also carry hidden risks," Jin Lei, a professor of public security who works with the municipal government, said.

"The focus on city safety should be turned to high-rises. Even before going up, there needs to be scientific proof to show they are feasible. Rules and regulations to limit the height and size of buildings will eventually be necessary," he said.

New generation of migrant workers faces identity crisis

By Han Manman

Poor, struggling, uneducated and clad in rags.

This may have described migrant workers a few years ago, but the new generation is going through a silent change.

At first glance, you would never guess one is a migrant worker. They wear light makeup, don professional dress and speak fluent Chinese. They know all the latest pop music and which online game is biggest this month.

But having the appearance of a young adult whose pulse is on the mainstream is not the same as being one. For these migrant workers, the quest for identity in their host city is a tough one.



An identity in their host city is a dream for many migrant workers.

CFP Photos

New generation

Despite high property prices, migrant worker Fan Xiaoshun decided to buy an apartment in eastern Jiangsu Province.

Fan has worked in Kunshan City, Jiangsu with his wife for seven years. "I want to buy a big apartment with three bedrooms so my parents can live with us," Fan, 27, from neighboring Anhui Province, said. Many a Chinese migrant worker hails from his province.

While his parents continue to work as farmers in their hometown, Fan is a typical young migrant worker on the streets of Kunshan.

On work days, he wears a blue or yellow uniform. But in his free time, he wears brand-name jeans and strides down the street listening to music on his cell phone.

Compared with their parents, Fan and his friends are a new generation of migrant workers.

Better conditions

Fan, who earned 1,000 yuan a month in 2000, has seen his wages double. His friend, Wu Dong from eastern Jiangxi Province, is a security guard. He earned just 600 yuan a month in 2000, but can now earn 2,000 yuan.

The first generation of migrants workers earned much less. They also went home more often, especially during major festivals or harvest time.

Cheng Defu, 60, from Jieshou City, Anhui has retired from migrant life. Five years ago, he worked as carpenter in Inner Mongolia and eastern Shandong Province, earning just 700 yuan a month, which he saved and brought back to his family.

The younger migrants seem to enjoy life more. Many spend what they make, rather than sending every cent home.

Li Dong, 18, from northwest

ern Gansu Province, works at an industrial park in Suzhou. He earns 1,500 yuan a month and spends most of it.

"In the evening, I go to Internet cafes after dinner, where I chat or play online games," he said. He shops on the weekend.

According to Cao Bingtai, vice director of the migrants work office of Jiangsu Province, some 25 percent of young male migrant workers the office polled this year and 35 percent of the women said they never sent money home.

So why leave home?

Li said he wanted to earn money and gain life experience.

He might be typical. Nanjing Normal University surveyed young migrant workers in the manufacturing, mining and service industries. The survey found that 54 percent of the 2,500 "new generation" migrant workers polled said improving themselves was the major reason they left home. Another 9 percent said they wanted to enrich their lives and 4 percent hoped to gain residence in the city, something to which their parents' generation seldom aspired.

Their education levels are rising, too.

According to another survey, this one conducted by the School of Politics and Public Administration of the Jiangsu-based Suzhou University, 32 percent of the 450 young migrants polled in Suzhou and Huai'an were graduates of vocational schools, 48 percent were middle school graduates and 10 percent had graduated from colleges or similar institutions.

Worries abound

Cao noted that 15 percent of the young migrant workers in his survey vowed never to return to



The public at large still views migrant workers as poor, struggling or uneducated.

their rural homes.

"The new generation of workers are internal migrants," said Wang Kaiyu, research fellow at the Anhui provincial Academy of Social Sciences.

Some cities, like Kunshan in Jiangsu, have tried to resolve migrant workers' "identity crisis" by encouraging them to buy an apartment.

Migrant workers who owned an apartment larger than 80 square meters for more than three years, who paid into the social endowment and health insurance funds for more than three years and had an employment contract with local company could gain permanent residence in Kunshan, Jin Xiongwei, vice head of the Kunshan Public Security Bureau, said.

This was part of the reason Fan bought his apartment.

But regardless of their residence status, most migrants still find themselves "on the outside, looking in" at the big cities.

Research by the Party committee of Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, found that 49 percent of the 886 respondents below 35 years old said they were "different" from local citizens.

Another 35.8 percent were unsure of their identity.

The problem was most obvious when it came to their children's education.

Wei Ping from Jieshou City, Anhui went to work in Shanghai with her husband in 2000. Their son is now six, old enough for schooling, but they worry where he should get his education.

"The quality of schools for migrants' children is poor, but we need an apartment certificate for him to enter a normal school," she said.

"Now that we are both in Shanghai, how can we let him study alone in our hometown? Who will follow and take care of him?"

(With reporting from Xinhua)

Pornographic SMS could be evidence of sex harassment

By Zheng Lu

People who pass dirty jokes or send a text message with "pornographic content" may face lawsuits if a new draft on protection of women's rights is passed.

Last week, a draft of Beijing's Implementation Measures on the Protection of Women's Rights in the People's Republic of China was submitted for further scrutiny by the Beijing Standing Committees. The draft defines sexual harassment for the first time.

Five forms of acts, including harassment by electronic communications, are considered to be sexual harassment, according to article 38 of the document. It said any sexual harassment to women in form of language, text, image, electronic message or behavior is forbidden.

Zhou Jidong, director of Office of Legislative Affairs, said it was the first time a concrete definition of sexual harassment has entered local law. He said the "electronic information" mentioned in the draft applied to text messages through mobile and online services.

According to a report published by the *Beijing Times*, more than 70 percent of women encountered sexual harassment in some form. For 50 percent of them, this came in the form of hearing dirty jokes, while 40 percent received phone calls or an SMS with "pornographic content." One in 10 women had been peeped on.

Four years ago, in the Implementation Measures on Protection of Women's Rights of People's Republic of China, the government said "sexual harassment of women is prohibited." However, there was no definition of what acts were sexual harassment. "This year's draft is more practical and easier to carry out," said Meng Xian-dong, a lawyer of Beijing Renhe Law Office.

Any woman who has encountered sexual harassment can lodge a complaint with her employer or the aggressor's employer or with the local branch of the women's federation. If she wishes, she may file a direct lawsuit in civil court. If found guilty, her aggressor would be punished by civil, penal or administrative means. The burden of proof is on the victim.

"It cannot be defined as sexual harassment if the woman did not say the act was offensive," Meng said. The woman's attitude is the crux of any lawsuit. He said if the woman did not express her negative feelings about a dirty joke or pornographic message, then she cannot prove that the act violated her will – part of what she must prove to win a sexual harassment suit.

Many worry that if a man tells a woman he loves her and she does not agree, then the woman may sue him for sexual harassment. Meng said the content of such words or messages must be considered and preserved by the man as evidence.

"If none of the man's words have anything pornographic nature but on the contrary are commendatory, such as 'I love you' or 'You are pretty,' then it would be hard to use such evidence to support a charge of sexual harassment," Meng said.

Foreigners, not immune to reality of the job market

By Zhang Dongya

At the annual job fair for foreigners organized by the Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs last month in Beijing, a record number of 1,300 foreigners attended. Previous years drew only around 600.

Around that time, the Beijing Talent Service Center held its second job fair for foreigners on May 16 and drew 500 overseas job hunters in one day.

This year may be the first that sees foreigners flocking to China in large numbers, due both to the country's rapid economic development and a collapse in their home country's employment options.

However, times have changed. The era when one was guaranteed work by speaking English fluently has passed; foreigners too face a tough local job market.



Foreigners are expected to feel the pinch of China's tough job market this year.

End of an era

When asking foreigners why they came to China, most answer the same: to learn Chinese. For the ones looking to speak standard Chinese, Beijing is the first stop.

JC Barbasa, 24, came from the Philippines to Beijing last August to practice Chinese. "I want to be a good speaker of mandarin," he said.

Olivia Roth from Switzerland, 41, who wants to learn another language in middle age, went first to Shandong Province in 2006 and then came to Beijing two years ago to continue her studies at the Central University for Nationalities.

Now, with more foreigners speaking Chinese, many companies want to employ people who are competent at both spoken and written forms to save money on translation.

At the job fairs, most job-hunters were asked about their Chinese level. Those who spoke no Chinese were at a great disadvantage.

Aside from the language, foreign job seekers were told to learn more about China and its culture.

Most foreigners said the best opportunities in China come through social connections – something newcomers to the country generally lack.

Teaching jobs toughen

According to statistics from the State Administration of Foreign Experts Affairs (SAFEA), more than 210,000 foreigners are working here today, and that

number has grown each year. "Teaching jobs make up the biggest number of vacancies because there is a high demand for English language knowledge here," Li Hai, who is in charge of SAEA's job fair, said.

In top tier cities like Beijing and Shanghai, working as a teacher in a university is demanding. Both college degrees and teaching qualifications are required. For those who have not obtained a teaching certificate, SAEA provides a Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) training. Its certificates are recognized throughout the country.

But, being a teacher at a kindergarten or teaching outside big cities is much easier for English speakers. Dean Dickson, 24, from Minnesota, is teaching his second term at a kindergarten. He arrived in Beijing last August and spoke no Chinese, but got along very well with children.

Olivia Roth also found work teaching children in Shandong Province despite her lack of qualifications.

However, few view it as a "real job" because of their lack of training and qualifications.

Race always a factor

Roth, a native German speaker, may complain about how Chinese corporations favor English speakers, but she still has it easier than many expats. Rain Jacinto, a Filipino, said a "Western" face matters more than any

English ability.

A high nose bridge and white skin may not be the ticket to easy street it was in the 1980s, but it certainly helps when competing against Asian applicants.

"My friends from the US who are Asian are scrutinized even more thoroughly than the white applicants when applying for a teaching job, even if they are a native English speaker," Jacinto said.

In teaching more than anywhere else, the only hope for many people of color is citizenship in the US, the UK or Australia. A black Dutchman, Leroy, said he could never have found work in an English training school without his dual citizenship in the UK.

"I think job hunting is easy if you are willing to teach English, but I am at a disadvantage. Though the Philippines uses English throughout its education system, we are not considered native English speakers," Jacinto said.

Li admitted many employers have a racist attitude to hiring, and that hiring practices remained unregulated. "Generally, more foreign talent competing in the job market gives employers more choices, and with that comes stricter requirements," he said.

In the past, foreigners worked only as language teachers. But now, many young and middle-aged workers are coming



English First (EF), one of many English training centers, attracted many foreign applicants at the job fair.

CFP Photos

to continue working in their fields of expertise, including in finance, consulting and high-tech industries.

Expect a challenge

With unemployment surging around the world, China is regarded as less affected by the recession. However, overseas job seekers will soon feel the pinch when they begin to hunt for jobs.

Roth returned to Europe this February to visit her family, but has been seeking work non-stop since then. She asked friends to run ads for her in the classifieds section of English newspapers and she tried to hunt online, but success has eluded her.

Last week, she returned to Beijing for interviews her friends arranged. She only has 30 days on her tourist visa, and said she could accept a less than ideal job to guarantee her stay in the country.

Barbasa said he had been hunting online for over a month with no results. He is considering a walk-in or an internship.

Most people feel pessimistic about this year's situation: Companies are cutting costs, and that translates into shedding workers.

But it is still hard to say whether foreign job seekers will retreat and head elsewhere for work. But those who remain in the local job market are advised to prepare.

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《Say Come On》 作者:杨贝贝

别眨眼，时局瞬间都会变 / 缩紧弦，机会就在万分之一秒间 / 无论是红土还是绿茵场边 / 我们都为你每一个精彩瞬间 / say come on / 挥洒汗水，释放激情到永远 / 从不放弃，坚持是我们的信念 / 不管结果怎样我的笑容都耀眼 / 因为有你们支持，我自己对我 / say come on

Lisa (北京环球七福广告有限公司副总经理):



可以看出作者想表达出的励志、积极、大气、阳光、可爱甚至有些理想主义的浪漫！
但就本次活动的主题而言，歌词的力度恐怕很难达到承载一场如此盛大国际化赛事的高度！

《China Open》 作者:范文哲

心 踩着梦想的节奏跳动在奥林匹克公园 / 梦 乘着激情的翅膀汇成沸腾的每个瞬间 / 一场场精彩绝伦的角逐 / 一次次刻骨铭心的超越 / 一阵阵因超越而萌生的悸动 / 一张张因悸动而绽放的笑容 / 一切尽在—— / China Open!.....

沈永革 (竹书文化总裁):

简单概括，气势恢宏，三言两语挑起大氛围。大有奥运会的国际美感。
但因为简单，所以每句要有深深的功力。但没能做到。比较浪漫的说法是：这位剑客已经有了华山论剑的胸怀，但今年还没练成巅峰的武功。



《Play Together》 作者:杨飞

Play Together / To keep going forever / Play your ball / To win your title all / Here we come together / Here we know each other / Play together / we are friends to share the honor.....



杨坤 (著名歌手):

抛开语言，这首词带给我的精神境界是国际的、奥运的、博大的、雄浑的、男性的、有乐趣的、年轻的、成熟的、酷的、有力量的。简单轻松地表现出力量、友谊、荣誉、坚强、梦想、竞技、团结。但审美微超前，纯英文——群众共呜度是个问题。

《我们的梦想》 作者:邹涛

有一个梦 / 在蓝天下飞翔 / 有一种力量 / 来自内心的渴望 / 梦想是舞动的翅膀 / 撞击是一次次挥洒的翅膀 / 那是我们的梦想 / 无论它有多远多长 / 那是快乐生成的翅膀 / 可以飞越前方的网 /

张东 (中央人民广播电台音乐之声副总监):

太短了，太精辟了！这是我的第一感觉！看这歌词的时候我甚至自己把它谱了曲子哼唱了几次！如果最终此作品入围，我会建议用我的原创曲！
歌词很美，表达出来的意境也很美，淡淡的有些感伤。而这也正是作品的不足，在如此一个体育类、国际赛事中用如此伤感情调的东西，多少显得有些不妥。



《生命的力量》 作者:张志鹏

不管南北东西我们相聚同一个地方 / 一起并肩释放心中的无限渴望 / 各尽所能进行着公平较量 / 换旗呐喊为对手诚恳鼓掌 / 让心胸比竞技场更加宽广 / 让汗水为梦想插上翅膀 / 让世界对我们予以肯定的奖项 / 这一刻所有的人不再寻常 /



仲衡 (著名音乐人):

优点：优点：这首词的精神力量很集中、宽广、温暖、热情、流畅、光明、青春、友好、健康，而且非常具备号召力。

缺点：用的词语缺乏惊喜。形容词偏多了点，不够直达。副歌（高潮部分）不够精简简单聚焦。

《梦想的赛场》 作者:苗怀强

有一个赛场给了我太多的光亮 / 我和你都在里面把目光看向辉煌 / 年轻的梦在你我之间传递力量 / 把对手当朋友，把眼睛看着远方 / 我看得见你给的勇敢今天在这骄傲的赛场上 / 是你的加油让我越走越强 / 一直跑向前，从开始到结束 / 把生命色彩变得更加闪亮 / 让我们扬起球拍 / 挥动翅膀 / 和对手一起迎接同样的梦想 /

张月明 (中央人民广播电台音乐之声编审部主任):

我想这首歌词很重要的优点，是作者有意识地把歌词往“美化文学”靠拢。做不好，总比不做强！建议作者下次进行此类创作时，需要提前配合意象的音乐，这样更方便自己创作出理想歌词的美！



Don't bet on China to rescue foreign carmakers

Don't look for China to drive consolidation in a global auto industry bloated with too much cost and capacity, analysts and executives say, despite a recent rash of reports and speculation that say otherwise.

Chinese businessmen, burned by past acquisitions that backfired, lack the know-how and stomach to buy car makers' entire operations, and are more likely to be bargain-bin shoppers for technology, designs and other assets being sold off in secondary sales.

Beijing Automotive Industry Corp (BAIC) is the latest name

in the frame, with Germany's Economy Ministry confirming the firm made an offer for Opel, the German unit of General Motors.

The offer now presents a fiercely contested four-way battle for control of a carmaker that traces its roots in Germany back to the 19th century.

BAIC can be added to a string of Chinese automakers said to be interested in buying an international asset in an industry undergoing a major overhaul as recession and tight credit cripple sales.

Other Chinese names that have

cropped up in mostly unconfirmed reports include Geely Automobile Holdings and Chongqing Changan Automobile, as potential bidders for Ford Motor's Volvo cars, and Geely for GM's Saab.

"It doesn't make sense for them to take over the entire operations, which is of little value for them. We have enough production capacity in China already," said Qin Xuwen, an analyst with Orient Securities in Shanghai.

"What we do need is branding and technology."

An executive inside one of the major automakers expressed sim-

ilar sentiment: "Chinese automakers are indeed interested in the foreign brands out there for sale, but few would want to take over the entire operations," he said, speaking on condition his name would not be used due to the sensitivity of the situation.

"What we want is the brand, technology or select platforms which we can then use to raise our own profile."

Others agree the companies are keen on getting access to technology and innovation, but running an overseas business is another matter. (Agencies)

IMG, CCTV to stage China Open tennis

By Huang Daohen

IMG worldwide, the US sports marketing firm and the nation's state broadcaster CCTV (China Central Television) announced Tuesday the launch of a joint venture to promote sports events.

The first event managed by the new group will be this year's China Open tennis tournament in October, a mandatory event for the top 50 women players.

"We own the world's richest channel in terms of resources at CCTV 5, which holds 85 percent of the Chinese sports TV market," Jiang Heping, the director of CCTV 5 channel who will head the new venture, said.

"The IMG-CCTV Sports Management Group will invest media resources worth hundreds of millions of yuan in the China Open to make it one of the most influential world tennis events," Jiang said.

In the future, other events will include US major league football and baseball, polo, skating and martial arts, the companies said in a joint statement.

The venture gives IMG a foothold in China's booming sports market, while granting CCTV access to foreign skills and experience in promoting and marketing.

"Our ultimate goal is to bring the world's best sporting events



IMG chairman Ted Forstmann announced Tuesday the launch of the joint venture.

CFP Photo

and management to China, and to bring China's best sports and sports culture to the rest of the world," IMG chairman Ted Forstmann said at a news conference.

Forstmann said that he was not overly concerned about the impact of the global economic downturn on sponsorship spending, and said he thought that even-

tually China could be a bigger sports market than the US.

"It's unique. Properly done, properly televised to the number of people CCTV covers, sponsors will sponsor these types of things," he said.

"The Chinese sports industry is nascent, I think it's going to grow substantially as the middle

class grows," he said. "I think it's the ideal time to start here."

This year's China Open, Asia's top tennis tournament, will move to the Olympic tennis center built for last year's Summer Games, the companies said in a joint statement. World number one Rafael Nadal is confirmed for the men's competition.

Outlook positive on chemical market

By Huang Daohen

The country's chemical and optical communication industry may be revived this year as global chemical giants continue to expand here, despite the current economic downturn.

Dutch chemical manufacturer DSM Desotech, which recently signed a four-year agreement with a domestic supplier of fiber and cable products for its new coating, said it was optimistic about the market and their long-term strategy in China remains solid.

According to the agreement, the company would manufacture and supply its new generation of optical fiber coatings, DeSolute Supercoatings, for the Yangtze Optical Fiber and Cable Company, a main supplier of fiber and cable products.

"The partnership with Yangtze Optical Fiber and Cable Com-

pany was significant in advancing the performance and reliability of fiber networks in China," Rob Crowell, DSM Desotech's vice president of fiber optic materials department, said.

Crowell was here in Beijing this week to attend the 2009 China Optical Communication Industry Development Summit.

As bandwidth demand explodes and presses fiber producers to increase line speeds for higher productivity, Crowell said advanced coating materials will be needed to meet the increasingly aggressive fiber performance requirements and reduce the risk of costly network failures.

"DSM created DeSolute Supercoatings in direct response to the tsunami of bandwidth requirements being generated worldwide by today's high-speed internet

applications," he said.

For the future strategy in China, Crowell said the economic stimulus plan, which focuses on expanding spending on infrastructure, was a shining beacon of hope amid the recession.

Jiang Weiming, president of DSM China, said the company is looking for merger and acquisition opportunities in China.

Jiang said DSM's China sales surpassed US \$1 billion (6.8 billion yuan) last year, and its target of growing that figure to US \$1.5 billion by 2010 remains unchanged.

"The global economic slumps have bitten into our business," he said, "However, we are optimistic about mid-term and long-term business prospects in China and our commitment to the investment and the market in China remains unchanged."



Rob Crowell
Photo provided by Ketchum Beijing

China Telecom teams with Microsoft on IM soft

China Telecom will reportedly cooperate with Microsoft to develop a new instant messaging system named eSurfing Live.

The new eSurfing Live will not only support voice calls and short message functions, but also can be integrated with China Telecom's other businesses, including My eHome and eSurfing Card. Users can log in to the software with their 189 email address and password.

This new software is currently undergoing a beta test and neither company has given clear guidance on when it will be formally unveiled.

Aviation giant to list arm overseas

A unit of the Aviation Industry Corp of China (AVIC), the huge state-owned aircraft maker, plans to list abroad in the near future, the official China Securities Journal said on Wednesday, citing AVIC President Lin Zuoming.

The China Aviation Technology International Holding is considering taking on more strategic investors in China and abroad, after securing one financial firm as its investor, the newspaper quoted its chairman Gu Huizhong as saying.

AVIC, as the company's controller, could lower its stake to less than 50 percent, while the financial firms, as strategic investors, can take up to a 20 percent stake in the company, Gu said.

Siemens breaks ground in wind market

Shanghai's new wind turbine production facility is expected to start operations next year, with the capacity to generate 500,000 kilowatt hours of energy annually.

Germany's Siemens broke ground last week on a new wind turbine production facility in Shanghai's Lingang New City.

"China could soon become the largest wind energy market in the world and we are establishing an excellent starting position for meeting the growing demand of this exciting market," said Wolfgang Dehnen, CEO of the Siemens Energy Sector, in a news release.

The new facility is scheduled to begin operating in the second half of 2010, initially with 400 employees. (Agencies)

McDonald's offers free caffeine hit

By Huang Daohen

McDonald's China has started a mass sampling campaign aimed at introducing its own blend of coffee, McCafe, by giving out a million cups to local consumers.

McDonald's said it will offer a cup of McCafe free of charge for customers who visit its chain locations in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Wuhan, Nanjing and Tianjin from 8 to 8:30 am from June 3 to 16.

Passerby pushes suicide man off a bridge

By Chen Zao

Last Thursday, 32-year-old Chen Fuchao, saddled with a 2-million-yuan debt, threatened to jump off Haizhu Bridge in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province. He held up rush-hour traffic as police shut down the bridge; a crowd of onlookers gathered to watch.

After a five-hour impasse, 66-year-old Lai Jiansheng, who managed to get past police barricades, approached Chen, shook his hand, then pushed him off the bridge. Chen fell eight meters onto a partially inflated air cushion, fracturing his elbow and spine. Lai was arrested immediately.

Lai said he learned from the media that "jumping shows" on the bridge were fairly common, and he got angry at the suicidal individuals' selfish acts. Since April, 11 people have threatened to jump off the bridge; they all followed the same routine: climb the bridge, cause a traffic jam, annoy citizens, then be persuaded to get off the bridge. It was reported that Lai rescued a "bridge jumper" three years ago.

Authorities said Chen will be charged with "disturbing public order," while

Lai will be charged with "intentional injury." Both will be tried and may face time in prison.

"Bridge jumpers seriously disrupt public order. They cause traffic congestion, so Lai wanted to end the stalemate as quickly as possible. Although Lai's method was crude, citizens understood," one netizen said.

Others say "jumping shows" waste people's time; office workers and students get sidetracked from their tasks by such spectacles. Jumpers take the public's time and attention hostage, which is extremely selfish, netizens said.

People who side with Chen, however, say Lai's action was tantamount to murder. "His behavior was violent and seriously disrupted social order. It violated moral codes even more than suicide," a critic said.

"We must focus on the legality of this act," another netizen said. "Lai should not ignore the value of a person's life, and should rationally consider his own behavior. No matter what his reasons, I don't think he had the right to decide someone's fate."

Expert view

Protests are a guaranteed right of citizens to protect themselves. The nature of a protest is to draw attention through acts that deviate from social norms.

First, it is a problem caused by social injustice. Second, from the long-term and overall perspective, it is a mechanism for social balance that can be controlled to achieve positive results. Third, each person is likely to experience social injus-

tice, so tolerating or helping others today will likely generate returns in the future.

From a protester's point of view, cities should have provisions for protest activities; make sure they have places or channels to vent their dissatisfaction. The government also needs well-trained police to handle traffic and maintain order.

— Chang Ping, critic with the Financial Times' Chinese Web site

Comment

Test gov's capability

The frequent occurrence of "jumping shows" may spur the government to come up with a plan to deal with them. The government should be able to deftly handle such incidents and shorten the time period to resolve such cases, thus improving the government's management capability.

— Chen Tianxiang, professor of Department of Public Administration at Zhongshan University

Focus on psychological counseling

I suggested a short detention for an opportunity to

carry out psychological counseling, which will also inform various government agencies of ways to solve the problem of "bridge jumping" as soon as possible. At the very least, suicidal individuals will have a channel to "unload."

— Liang Wenyong, professor at China University of Political Science and Law

Reevaluate society's attitude

If we consider "jumping shows" a big inconvenience, we should reevaluate society's attitude toward life.

— Yang Gengshen, a journalist



Doling out money regarded a cultural insult. Photo provided by Nanfang Daily

US basketball player criticized for doling out money to students

By Venus Lee

A US basketball player doled out money to students last Friday during a visit to a middle school in Jishou city, in northwestern Hunan Province.

The player was a member of a team of sports envoys from the US Continental Basketball Association (CBA). The team was invited to play against Lithuania's basketball team in a tournament organized by Hunan's Xiangxi Sports General Association and Xiangxi Basketball Association.

The day before the competition, the US team visited Jishou No. 1 Middle School. When the players were already aboard their bus, ready to depart, one of them suddenly opened a window and distributed money to students who came to see them off.

Pandemonium erupted. Students flooded into the bus and held out their hands to the player for money. According to witnesses, one girl dumped the money in a garbage can after crumpling and tearing it to protest the scene, but the money was quickly picked up by a student beside her.

Comment

Shows low quality of education

It was a shameful incident. Regardless of what the US basketball player did, the students' shameless behavior will affect the school's reputation, even the nation's image. The incident shows the school's low quality of education, so the school and the education department should seriously rethink their program.

— Yang Jun, postgraduate student at the Communication University of China

Player's behavior was vulgar

The US player's behavior was improper, even vulgar. Although I don't know the reasons he gave away money, his behavior was unreasonable. If the player deliberately did it to cause a scene, the tournament organizer should also take responsibility.

— Jeff Hunter, freelancer

It is human nature

I can understand those students. What they did could happen to anyone. Are you sure you'll be unmoved if you find yourself in such a situation? And I think it's no big deal; the player was willing to give money, why not take it? Students are not idiots.

— Yang Shuai, netizen

No need to be too sensitive

I think it wasn't as serious as most Chinese people think. Maybe the player did it on an impulse, without any ulterior motives, but people from different cultural backgrounds will read it in different ways. We need not be too sensitive, take it easy.

— David Wright, cultural magazine editor



Social networking site hopes for big time using 'non-Facebook' strategies

By Wang Yu

Photographers from P1.cn snapping shots of trendy people in malls or night clubs has become a common occurrence in town the past two years. Using such "non-Facebook" strategies, the social networking site has grown to half a million members, and hopes to make it big worldwide.

The site was co-founded by Alexander Frederiksen, grandson of a Greek shipping magnate but who prefers to keep mum about his high-profile family background. Frederiksen grew up in Sweden and used to be the youngest diplomat in Europe – but he started an IT business long before that.

He discovered a passion for computer programming at age 12, and three years later, opened a Web consulting firm with classmates. The company, based in Cyprus, "had clients all over Europe, developing big Web sites such as Gucci.com," Frederiksen said. "I never went to high school and obtained my degree through a distance-education program."

The firm's focus then shifted to security, scalability, user-interface design and collaboration with Swedish online communities. "Sweden was one of the first countries actively involved in online social networking. I realized it was a very lucrative model and I wanted to build a similar Web site," Frederiksen said.

Wang Yu, a schoolmate and friend of Frederiksen's, who moved from China to Sweden at age seven, introduced him to Beijing and to a new business idea. "In school, we shared an interest in computers and he convinced me the best and fastest growing market is here," Frederiksen said.

The two men banded with Sophia Pan to form P1.cn. The three quit their jobs in Sweden and moved to China in late 2006.

"We actually began analyzing the market here while in Sweden and concluded Chinese society had a new upper class and upper middle class. They're a very homogenous group of around 20 million brand consumers with big spending power," Frederiksen said.

The firm went through a lot of bumps its first year. The team did not know how to reach their target market, so traffic within their site was low. They conducted more research and came up with their winning business model in mid-2007.

P1.cn photographers roam the city looking for fashionable people. The photographs will then be sent to the subjects via email with an invitation to join P1.cn. Membership shot up, and more individuals are signing up everyday, drawn by special privileges such as discounts at restaurants, nightclubs and shopping malls.

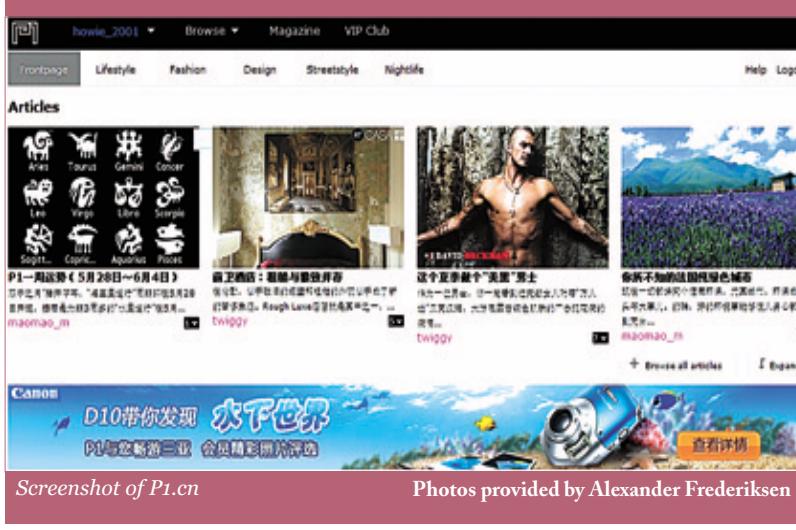
"We have a big team doing research on our market and developing products for them, that's the unique thing about us. No one in China understands this group more than us," Frederiksen said.

The global financial crisis has brought new obstacles – big brands, P1.cn's most important advertisers – have taken a step back, but Frederiksen is confident the business is strong enough to pull through. "We have the right people, know our target group and have proven they will stick with us. Good projects always survive," he said.

P1.cn remains a niche brand, but Frederiksen says the site is only 5 percent of what he envisions. "There are many things in the pipeline this year. We hope to dominate this target group and to be the most efficient way to reach them. Having had a great start, I believe our team has the most potential to make it," he said.



Frederiksen said he is a businessman, not a computer expert or fashion nut.



Screenshot of P1.cn

Same gang behind 'gold powder' and 'black paper' scheme

By Zheng Lu

Three African men who sold a Chinese national "gold powder" turned out to be the same gang behind the "black paper that turns into money" swindling operation reported late last year, police said. One of the suspects has been arrested.

The latest victim, a man surnamed Li, met the three suspects while traveling on a train from Guangzhou to Beijing early last month. One of the men introduced himself as Schmid, a diplomat in China. Li said Schmid told him his parents have died and left him a big inheritance of gold, and that he intended to sell the precious metal at a "low price" of 200,000 yuan. Li was interested in the gold and said he would give his final answer upon checking the goods in Beijing.

Several days after they arrived in the city, Li met with the men in a teahouse near Wukesong, Haidian District. Schmid and his two companions gave Li a bag of what they said was a gram of gold powder, a "sample" of Schmid's inheritance.

Li took the sample to a gold appraisal center for examination. Results showed the bag indeed contained gold powder, with a purity grade of 95.6 percent. Li was ecstatic and thought a great fortune was already within his reach. Li got in touch with Schmid and said he wanted to buy the rest of the gold.

On April 15, Li and a friend met with Schmid on a roadside near a residential community in Chaoyang District. Li handed Schmid 200,000 yuan in cash; in return he received a 25-kilogram box with gold powder. Li immediately took the goods for appraisal.

The following afternoon, Li's world got turned upside down: the testing center said 61.8 percent of the powder was bronze; 26.1 percent was zinc; the rest was impure elements. Li immediately called Schmid, but his mobile number was no longer working. It was then that it hit Li that he had been swindled, and immediately contacted the Public Security Bureau (PSB).

After nearly a month's investigation, the Chaoyang PSB tracked down the suspects. Two weeks ago, the police caught one of the men in front of a clothing market in Sanlitun. Li identified him as Schmid.

Interrogation revealed that Schmid's real name is Morris. He is 26 years old, comes from West Africa and works in cahoots with the two other men Li met. But the biggest surprise was that they were the same group behind the "black paper" scheme, which convinced victims black paper could be turned into banknotes when rubbed with a special liquid.

Morris said his gang came up with the "gold powder" strategy after the media exposed the "black paper" scheme. He said they often pretended to be "diplomats" or "embassy staff," bought a small amount of gold powder to convince people they were the real deal, then dumped local bronze powder on the victims.

The PSB is working to locate the two other suspects. Meanwhile, the police said the public should beware such schemes and be careful if something sounds too good to be true.

Celebrate Children's Day with black light show

By Venus Lee

The Israeli embassy invited more than 300 Chinese and Jewish primary school students to the premiere of an Israeli black light show last Friday in advance of the Children's Day celebration.

The show *Fun Tazi*, held at the National Center for the Performing Arts, talked about a youngster's wonderful dream. It featured magical visual effects using ultraviolet light on a black background in the darkened hall. The performers, invisible in black clothing, manipulated the fluorescent props and scenery, which produced an eerie effect.

"It's the most incredible, magical and

funny show I've ever seen. It took us to a world where gravity disappears and is full of interesting creatures," Yao Bin, a fifth grader in Sunying Primary School, said.

The interaction between performers and their young audience marked the show's climax. "It was fun to bounce around the planet like balls bouncing from a platform, and we screamed a lot when the furry 'spiders' climbed over us. It was a bit scary, but really exciting," Yao said.

Lior Halton, *Fun Tazi*'s director, said the black light theater is an adaptation of Chinese shadow puppet theater. "I brought the show to the land of its origin and hoped it would bring joy to children

on their festival," he said. The performance was staged for the first time as part of the Beijing International Children's Theater Festival.

The Israeli ambassador, Amos Nadai, said culture is a window to knowing a country, and can bring together people of different backgrounds. He said he hoped the black light show broadened the children's understanding of art and creativity.

"Children's education is a value shared by China and Israel. Because children are our future, we should nurture them and provide opportunities for them to become creative persons who will make our world better," Nadai said.



Photo by Jacky Huang

S Korea remembers ex-president Roh

By Venus Lee

The South Korean embassy opened a mourning hall to the public from Monday to Thursday to commemorate former President Roh Moo-hyun, who committed suicide last Saturday. Flags in the embassy will fly at half-mast today for

Roh's burial.

In the center of the mourning hall, on the embassy's first floor, is a square mat facing a photograph of Roh as Korean mourning customs involve honoring the deceased by kowtowing. Beside the mourning hall, in the embassy's main

hall, are funeral wreaths and a condolences book.

Korean nationals and diplomats were among those who visited to pay their final respects. The mourning hall was arranged upon the consent of the ex-president's family, the embassy said.

Pakistan will support its business community in exploring ties

By Han Manman

The Pakistan embassy has assured Pakistani businesspeople in the country it will extend all possible assistance to expand new avenues for trade and investment with Chinese counterparts.

In a meeting with entrepreneurs this week, Ambassador Masood Khan said there was great potential for Basmati rice and Pakistani cuisine in China, particularly in Beijing in view of the growing popularity of international cuisine in the city.

They also discussed holding a week-long Pakistani food festival in Beijing, working with renowned domestic food vendors to introduce the South Asian country's cuisine, making innovative efforts to market in China produce like mangoes and to promote these fruits within the local diplomatic community.

Better cooperation between China and Pakistan in tourism and culture was emphasized, along with regular contact between businesspeople from the two sides for better coordination of economic activities.

The meeting was among a series of activities the embassy held this week to mark the 58th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between China and Pakistan.

Part of the lineup of events was a reception for at least 100 Pakistani students enrolled in graduate, post-graduate and doctoral programs in various colleges and universities in Beijing.

"This is a place where you can pursue your studies with peace of mind, in a rich educational and technological ambiance," Khan said.

"As you study medicine, engineering, biology and chemistry, humanity awaits your contributions and your vision of creating peaceful, harmonious and stable neighborhoods," he said.

The ambassador told students China is the future of the world, because it has turned every challenge into an opportunity. He cited as examples last year's massive earthquake in Sichuan Province, the Beijing Olympics and the international financial crisis. In all three instances, China demonstrated unequalled ingenuity, Khan said.

He said the embassy will make every effort to ensure that those who are training for medical professions will get internships in prestigious Chinese hospitals.

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nanjing:5f 506, no.18 zhongshan road,deji plaza,nanjing
shenzhen:4f, no.33, 5th wexin road, coastal city, nanshan district

Juer Hutong's expats celebrate Dragon Boat Festival with zongzi

By Zheng Lu

Two days before the Dragon Boat Festival, anyone who stepped into the courtyard of novelist Maodun's former home in Dongcheng District was invited by residents to make and eat rice cakes. Locals in Juer Hutong thought up the activity to involve their expat neighbors in celebrating the important festival, albeit in advance.

The neighborhood committee introduced the history of the Dragon Boat Festival on Tuesday, which also told the origins of zongzi or glutinous rice dumplings. Old-timers then taught their guests how to prepare the snack.

Suzuki Tomoe, a Japanese woman who has lived in the country six years, made six zongzi. She said zongzi is also a traditional food in Japan, "but the ingredients and the cooking method are different." Japanese zongzi uses stickier rice and is braised, instead of boiled like it is in China, Suzuki said.

Suzuki, who this week opened a cafe near Maodun's former resi-



Dominick Johnson-Hill, from the UK, learns to make zongzi.

Photo by Zheng Lu

dence in the neighboring Houyu-anen Temple Hutong, said she was grateful for the chance to interact with her neighbors.

"We know that foreigners who choose to live in a hutong do so

to experience its cultural atmosphere," Li Jin, a neighborhood committee member said.

Community relationships were vital in Old Beijing and this tradition should be kept alive, she

said, so that next-door neighbors don't become strangers like they do in apartment buildings. "It is important to give foreign residents the opportunity to mingle with local folks," Li said.

The former residence of Maodun, a modern writer who lived near the area, from 1974 to 1981, has been turned into a museum which exhibits his books and personal possessions. "Because of its cultural value, we thought it was a good place for foreigners to enjoy the festival with local residents," Li said.

A British national who introduced himself as Jiang Senhai, and who has lived in Juer for over 12 years, made zongzi for the first time and didn't seem to want to stop. "They say that few Chinese youngsters know how to make zongzi nowadays, so I think it's not a bad idea that we foreign youngsters be taught to take over the tradition," he joked.

Later that day, the community held a bigger zongzi-making and eating activity for foreign families, including lots of children.

Foster homes for happier children and families

By Jin Zhu

A children's charity helping orphans has noticed an interesting development over the last 10 years: Foster homes not only improve the development of orphaned and handicapped children; it also creates a positive impact on participating families.

"A vast majority of foster mothers believe their foster child has brought harmony to the family, and many think their relationship with their neighborhood and community has been enhanced, with some reporting that their husbands now spend more time at home," said Robert Glover, executive director of Care for Children, which this week celebrated a decade of family-based foster services in China.

The group, founded in 1998 and also registered in the US and UK, helps orphaned children from institutions find long-term, loving foster families. It helps mobilize grassroots projects by providing such support as training and financial assistance.

The organization's National Foster Care Project, run together with the China Social Work Association, covers 38 project sites across 27 Chinese provinces and supports over 300 child welfare institutions.

An estimated 200,000 orphaned children in China have left institutions and are now with families, a spokesman said at the charity's "10-year Celebration Conference" on Tuesday.

"Children in institutions often live in relative isolation from normal communities, and this can cause difficulties for children when learning how to become members of society. For example, it is difficult for a little boy to learn to be a father if he does not have a father figure as a role model," Frazer White, Care for Children's director, said.

Once placed in a foster family, a child from an institution will experience a significant increase in attention and care, which comes from a variety of new relationships, such as parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, brothers and sisters, neighbors, even pets. The child then understands and becomes part of society's basic unit, White said.

Care for Children is still developing programs to improve the lives and education of children in both foster families and institutions.

Beijing's biggest electronic music party

By Wang Yu

D. Park at 798 Art District became a land of party animals during last Saturday's Intro Electronic Music Festival. Over 10,000 people flocked to the main stage: The mass of bodies moving in rhythm that created the city's best party scene ever.

The concert started at 1 pm, but the venue was not filled until 5 pm, when the temperature began to cool down. The stage, sound system, light and the LED screen were set up inside an old factory, which gave the party an industrial feel.

A high-energy, afternoon affair was too early for most of the partiers, but the sunlight helped fashionistas show off their meticulously chosen wardrobe. Among the crowd were fashion photographers busily snapping at beautifully clothed gyrating bodies while DJs tirelessly mixed records to keep the people's energy pumping. An attention-grabber was a middle-aged woman who joined hiply dressed youngsters in doing steps of the *yange*, a kind of folk dance.

Shin Nishimura, a Japanese DJ, showed his eclectic taste in music by mixing a Radio-



Thousands attended the Intro Electronic Music Festival in 798 last Saturday.

Photo by Wang Yu

head song with his own electronic grooves. Italoboyz from Italy and Chris Liebing from Germany ruled the dance floor at night with their fascinating

techno sounds.

Partiers went crazy when a ray of light from the main stage shone on the dance floor and around the factory area.

VJs then took over with music videos played on the LED screen until the party came to an abrupt close at 11 pm due to "security reasons."

Fashion house promotes environmentally friendly cotton fibers

By Wang Yu

Italian fashion brand Lotto Leggenda yesterday presented its limited edition of American cotton collection in the Central Academy of Fine Arts at a show sponsored by the Cotton Council International (CCI).

The event, which launched Natural World limited products, was organized to inspire

the world to return to natural fibers like cotton.

"It is a timeless initiative to encourage the world to wear more pure cotton and enjoy a lifestyle that brings us closer to nature," Karin Malmstrom, director of CCI China, said. "I'm confident that using more natural fabrics will aid society's development in a sustainable and healthy way."

Fashion companies Dinosaur, K-Swiss, Schiesser, Ivy House and Casablanca Home participated in the show, along with Taiwanese celebrity Xu Xiyuan.

"I'm delighted to ... promote this project for environmental protection. It's a personal priority of mine to advocate a return to nature and protect the environment," Xu said.

Proceeds from the sale of the designs will be donated to the Chinese Environmental Protection Foundation in a combined effort by the cotton industry, fashion brands, entertainment industry and environmental protection agencies to help the environment.

Meanwhile, Lotto Leggenda, which entered the Chinese market in March, said it wants to offer

consumers style and quality through its sporty fashion.

"Sports fashion clothing is still a new concept in China and no company has become strong enough to dominate the market yet. Sexy and tasteful will be Lotto's keywords, which we hope will attract young people," Guo Junwen, the company's marketing manager, said.

E-waste disposal moving forward, but taking baby steps

By Venus Lee

Michele Hunter, 36, manager of an Australian consulting firm, wants to get rid of some household appliances, but she doesn't know where to dump them.

"I want to buy a new refrigerator and air-conditioner, but the old ones are still inside my apartment. I don't know where to bring them," she said.

Chinese friends suggested Hunter take them to a metal-extraction plant, where she can keep the reusable metals; or sell them to roaming electronic waste collectors, who will then pass them on to second-hand household appliance markets. Hunter ruled out these options because her old refrigerator and air-conditioner have exceeded their lifespan.

Improper disposal or recycling of electronic waste or e-waste can harm the human body and the environment. Electronic products contain many toxic substances, such as lead, chromium, mercury, cadmium, polybrominated biphenyls (PBB) and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE).

"Direct incineration or landfill treatment is not environmentally friendly and almost 80 percent of waste electrical appliances are not disposed of or recycled properly," said Zhou Xu, marketing manager of Huaxing Environment Protection Development, the city's only designated e-waste recycling company.

The incineration of e-waste produces many noxious gases and dioxins, carcinogenic substances. Dumping them with



E-waste disposal requires professional methods due to safety concerns.

CFP Photo

other garbage in landfills will produce leachate, a liquid with complex pollutant components and a high concentration of poison, which contaminates the soil and underground water.

"Once the contaminated surface water and underground water are absorbed by humans, poisonous heavy metal accumulates in the body," Xu Xiaoling, spokeswoman of the country's Electronics Waste Comprehensive Utilization Work Committee, said.

According to data released by the China Household Electrical Appliances Association, the coun-

try has over 150 million discarded TVs, washing machines, refrigerators, air-conditioners and computers. "A solution to the e-waste problem can not be delayed," Huo Dufang, the association's chairperson, said.

The municipal government has been trying to improve its e-waste disposal and recycling program, but progress is slow due to huge costs and poor public awareness of environmental protection.

Zhou, of the Huaxing e-waste recycling firm, said Beijing has a handful of e-waste collection sites scattered all around town (see box).

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Email your questions to:
weiyi@ynet.com

My digital camera's lens is broken and I want to get it fixed. I bought it brand-new a few months ago at a Canon store in Shanghai, and it came with a one-year warranty. I'm looking for an official Canon store in Beijing to have it repaired.

There is a Canon Service Center on the 15th floor of Jinbao Da Sha, 89 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District. They specialize in repairs, including products under warranty. Call 8513 9999 for more information.

I've been saving all my used batteries for the past year. I don't want to throw them into a regular garbage bin. Is there some sort of recycling center I can bring them to?

Most communities have a battery recycling box, so keep an eye out for it. You can also drop by a recycling office the next time you're in Xidan. It's the China Resource Recycling Association, 6/F Huaheng Da Sha, 2 Heng'ertiao, Xidan, Xicheng District; Tel: 6602 2450.

I'm looking for a good dentist, either a private practitioner or someone in a company. Can you recommend anyone?

Joinway Dental Clinic is a private clinic in Dongzhimen. The place is clean and the doctors and nurses give professional service. They have English-speaking dentists and charge affordable rates: 160 yuan for cleaning and 120 yuan for polishing. You can find it at 11D Building D, Oriental Ginza, 48 Dongzhimen Wai Dajie, Dongcheng District. Call 13261816708 for its English service.

The outdoor pool I used to go to was closed last year as the place was used for the Olympic Games. Are there any outdoor pools open in town?

Three downtown outdoor pools open to the public in June, with a price of 20-30 yuan per day.

Qingnianhu park
Where: Andeli Bei Jie, Dongcheng District
When: 9 am - 5 pm
Tel: 6423 6141
Cost: 20 yuan; 15 yuan for children under 1.3 meters

Tuanjiehu Park
Where: 16 Tuanjiehu Nan Li, Chaoyang District
When: 9 am - 6 pm
Tel: 6506 1364
Cost: 25 yuan

Baolian Tiyu Park
Where: 48 Beiwa Xi Li, Haidian District
When: noon - 9 pm
Tel: 6843 8898
Cost: 10 yuan; free for children under 1.1 meters

(By Zheng Lu)

More trains to Tianjin this weekend

By Annie Wei

Most people will enjoy a four-day-long weekend this Dragon Boat Festival.

For those planning a trip to Beijing's neighboring city of Tianjin during the holiday, the railway authority has good news. From Thursday till Sunday, there will be an extra 14 trains between the two cities from 9:20 am until 4:55 pm. That is one additional train trip every one or two hours.

Still, seats on express trains might not be enough to meet the huge demand. Aside from express trains that depart from Beijing South Railway Station, passengers can hop on Tianjin-bound regular speed trains at the Beijing Railway Station.

These trains travel the distance to Tianjin half an hour slower than their express counterparts, but they are also 50 percent cheaper. One-way express train tickets cost 56 yuan, while those for regular trains cost 25 yuan.

The Beijing Railway Station is also a more convenient departure point for people who live downtown or in west Beijing.

Summer nights of live jazz are back



Jazz band Girassol Bossa Nova

By Annie Wei

Jazz music fans are trying to create a bigger space for their beloved sound in town.

Leon Lee, 30, a Chinese American who has been promoting the local jazz scene, announced a new live music venue to take over the short-lived

OT Lounge. Besides jazz, OT presented a diverse array of tunes: world music, blues, soul, rhythm and blues, folk and funk.

Stepping into the void is Jimmy's Thai Kitchen & Lounge at the ground floor of the East Gate Plaza in Chaoyang District.

Jimmy's, with a seating capac-

ity of 100, will do something more non-rock venues should do, Lee said, which is to charge admission and offer non-rock DJs and artists a good wage. Rock bands and DJs have been on a roll, nourished by enthusiastic audiences who will fork out money to see a good show, he said.

If jazz lovers pay to enjoy the music, then Beijing's jazz scene might see its own version of Yugongyishan and Mao Live House, Lee said.

Jimmy's Thai Kitchen & Lounge

Where: 1/F East Gate Plaza Tower B, (behind Poly Theatre; inside mall across from Baskin Robbins), Dongzhong Jie, Chaoyang District

Tel: 6415 5157

Cost: 30 yuan (includes a draft beer or soft drink)

Music Calendar

May 30, Saturday

Girassol Bossa Nova

This spin-off ensemble of SambAsia Beijing celebrates everybody's favorite style from Rio de Janeiro: bossa nova.

Girassol, "sunflower" in Portuguese, will perform a repertoire reminiscent of bossa

nova ala Bonfa, Jobim, Gilberto, Vinicius de Moraes. The group will also swing into a more contemporary style from the likes of Maria Rita.

June 6, Saturday
Makin' the Changes – Nathaniel Gao Quartet

Gao is a saxophonist and

composer who leads Red Hand Jazz Quartet and other ensembles.

Audience can expect a mixed bag of grooves to include non-standards by the likes of Joe Henderson, Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, plus the quartet's own originals.

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For the market? Chinese art

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temporary art will cease. "This
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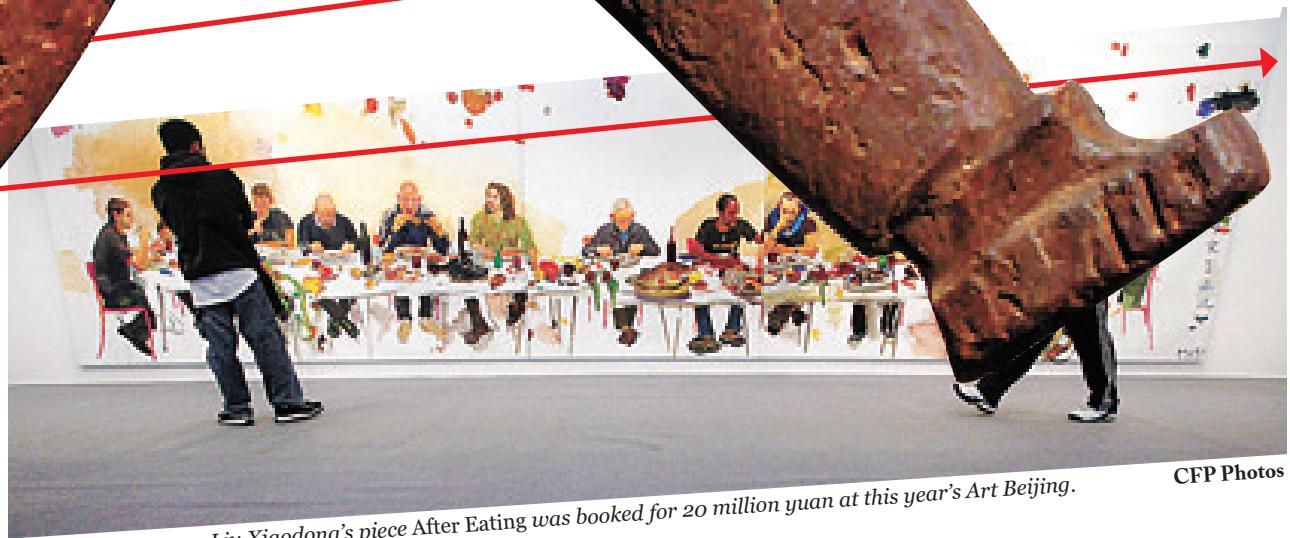
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Will contemporary art
market stride ahead?

Liu Xiaodong's piece *After Eating* was booked for 20 million yuan at this year's Art Beijing.

CFP Photos



Sidelights of old Shanghai in a Whangpoo whiskey haze

By Zhang Dongya

History is often a heavy topic, but not when told by Maurine Karns and Pat Patterson, as in *Shanghai: High Lights, Low Lights, Tael Lights* (130pp, Earnshaw Books, 140 yuan).

The 1930s-era book, reprinted for 2009, has a new foreword by Michael Schoenhals, a professor of Lund University who stumbled across the book in the Fudan University library in 1975 and was captivated by it.

"We know very little about [Shanghai], but know a hell of a lot about that very little," the duo said in a sort of foreword of the book, aptly titled "An explanation, but not an apology."

Karns and Patterson, self-described "pioneers of a New Group" of Shanghai writers, scrapped the boring statistics and details about Whangpoo town. Their book does not cite dynasty dates or name temples, but offers a composite of what Shanghai looked, felt and smelled like: a grand place to live, work and enjoy life.

Publisher Graham Earnshaw reminded readers that the mistakes in spelling and grammar, which appeared in the authors' manuscripts, probably came during a Whangpoo whiskey haze.

The hardship of Russians in Shanghai was seldom seen in other guidebooks. Many of them led a hand-to-mouth existence, even competing with locals as beggars.

For the "lovely damsels" of Shanghai, readers will see how "lovely" they were in the authors' eyes. "Painted, scented, powdered to perfection, every hair in place, her gown as colorfully dainty as can be conceived..."

Personal chits, or the Chinese version of an IOU, were so popular at that time that, "In Shanghai, a person may enter practically any restaurant or cafe and merely inscribe his name and address on a slip of paper" to settle an account: it was an unusual thing for a foreigner to carry actual cash.

There were vivid descriptions about this weird oriental phenomenon at that time, also a sad picture of those collecting chits and waiting for the money.

The foreword writer Schoenhals said, compared to authors of other early 20th

Take a trip back to Old Shanghai with this outrageous 1936 guide to the Paris of the East

HIGH LIGHTS

LOW LIGHTS

TAEL LIGHTS

By Maurine Karns & Pat Patterson

century guides to Shanghai Karns and Patterson were "vulgar, informative and in your face."

But there is one thing for sure: they enjoyed life in the old town. They learned well the Chinese tea rituals, even local tastes, like how "day-old noodles are considered a greater delicacy than fresh noodles."

When people left, even the ones who professed to hate the town, they began to regret as they sailed away looking back one last time. "Wherever they are going, they will always want to come back."

"The old town must have something," the book says as it closes. And that something is magic.

Bookworm book listing

Vivian Wang from the Bookworm recommends the following best sellers to *Beijing Today* readers.

Brothers: A Novel

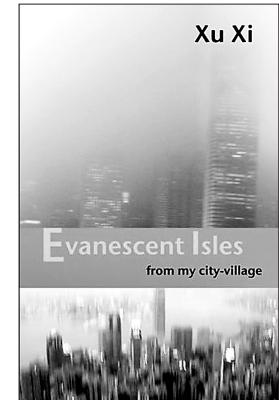
By Yu Hua, 656pp, Pantheon, US \$29.95



The author gives us a surreal tale of two brothers riding the dizzying roller coaster of life in a newly capitalist world. As comically mismatched teenagers, Baldy Li, a sex-obsessed ne'er-do-well, and Song Gang, his bookish, sensitive stepbrother, vow that they will always be brothers – a bond they will struggle to maintain over the years as they weather the ups and downs of rivalry in love and making and losing millions.

Evanescent Isles: From My City-Village

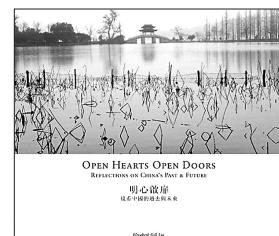
By Xu Xi, 115pp, Hong Kong University Press, US \$21.95



Xu Xi writes from within, of Hong Kong's vanishing culture and sensibility in this surreal example of postmodernity. She zooms in on her own life in the city: on family, friends and her professional history as both business executive and author, to focus on moments that offer wry observations of the shifting world around her.

Open Hearts Open Doors: Reflections on China's Past and Future

By Elizabeth Gill Lui and Chor Koon Fai, 241pp, Cornell University Press, US \$50.00



The book provides a visual journey to traditional villages throughout rural areas of southeastern China. Photographed between 1995 and 2006, while Elizabeth Gill Lui was a visiting artist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong in the Department of Architecture, this collection of stunning images focuses on a cultural and architectural vernacular environment struggling to survive in a dynamically transforming era.

(By He Jianwei)



By Li Jing

Fuchen was one of the top three business novels in 2008. It was first posted to the popular Tianya Forum (tianya.cn), and then went on to find popularity with its print edition. Author Cui Manli, who writes under the pen name Jingcheng Luoshen, published a new book *Liuli Shidai* (Colored Glass Time, 423pp, The Writers Publishing House, 33 yuan) in April.

Unlike her previous book, this one tells a story of the Republic of China. During the unstable period, Feng Yi meets Yuan Zixin and they fall in love at first sight. Yuan does not believe that he can protect his lover in war time, and he believes it is better for her to learn to take care of herself. His actions toward Feng are contradictory: loving her, yet being serious and cold. Feng gradually grows from a naive young girl to an enterprising young woman: the change teaches them about love and responsibility.

The novel is the culmination of several years of hard work. Cui started work on the novel in early 2004. Her research materials ranged from books, newspapers and magazines of the period to documentaries, pictures and theses. She says an authentic setting is the cornerstone of any historical fiction. In the

novel, street scenes, bazaars, home conditions and social strata are all captured correctly.

Every day, she spent two hours on research and two hours on writing. She completed the first draft in 2006, but scrapped it, unsatisfied with the finished product. Cui worked out the second version a year later. Still unsatisfied, she tried again in summer 2008, though she put it on hold due to the unexpected success of *Fuchen*.

Her inspiration for *Fuchen* came from shocking news in the IT industry, where she worked as a director in a high-tech multinational. *Fuchen* rose quickly and made Cui a bestselling author of 2008.

Cui chose to continue revising *Liuli Shidai*, because she preferred its value of high-art to popular business writing. She finally finished this spring, and the completion realizes the dreams of her late grandparents, who were born in that period.

The novel underscores business stories, Cui's forte, and depicts competition and conflict among traditional, new and foreign enterprises during the 25 years between 1910 and 1935. It explores how people struggled against or averted disasters, succeeding at time and failing at others.

Blast from the past

Adults celebrate Children's Day

By He Jianwei

"Although we are nearly 30, we still think our childhood was more interesting than what kids today experience."

Adults who will not let go of their childhood posted on douban.com asking for peers to play classic games with this weekend for Children's Day. The 1980s are coming back, and many adults are finding time for their childhood favorites.

Get out of the house!

Most 80s children grew up playing with friends on the playground. But since the dawn of the Internet, more and more people have chosen to stay home and play online games.

"When looking back at the games we played in our childhood, I found that they involved exercise, like hoop rolling, tops, hop-scotch and skipping rope," Yang Dong, an editor at Beijing Television, says.

He stays at the studio to edit programs and has little time for outdoor exercise. "Other young people find time to go to the gym, but my job barely affords time to eat. But really, that's just an excuse. I don't go to the gym because it is boring," he says.

Yang saw a post on Tiantan BBS two years ago, where Beijing's netizens talked about meeting up to play childhood games. Over 20 people attended the gathering at Beijing Botanical Gardens, where they jumped rope, tossed bean bags and played marbles.

"We had fun with the games and it gave us a chance to get some fresh air and exercise," he says.

Reviewing sweet memories

Li Ming and Zhang Yang have been married for a year. Both work at 9-to-5 jobs and come home to watch television. But the stress of work only grew day after day, and they found life monotonous.

Last year on Children's Day, Li and Zhang saw a group of adults playing childhood games in their community. The games brought them back to the past.

"It was one of the most fun nights ever, at least before supper. Children in our neighborhood always met to play hide and seek or the eagle and the chicks. My mom had to drag me home by my ears when it was time for dinner," Zhang said.

Li grew up in a rural area, and said he and his friends stayed out after dark – even when their parents were looking for them.

With the monotony of work, many say they have lost something. Adults are hunting down and purchasing old toys, like marbles, whips and tops, to play old games in their spare time.

Simple but happy

Most games from childhood required two or more people, which made it easier to make friends.

"We didn't really understand loneliness, and there was never a shortage of playmates. But we never see children from our building playing with each other," Li says.

"Although new games, especially those online, are interesting and attractive, they take a lot of time and cost money. Our games were simple but happy. Everyone who joined in was able to share that happiness," Zhang says.



Childhood games

The eagle and the chicks

This game requires at least five players. One person is chosen to be the eagle and the other is the mother hen. Everyone else is the chicks. The chicks line up behind the mother hen, holding the waist of the person in front of them. The eagle tries to catch a chick so he will be no longer be the eagle, and the mother hen tries to protect the chicks from the eagle.

Tops

Wind the cord tightly around the top, hold it up straight and give it a rip. While the top is spinning, try to keep it going by hitting it with the cord. The person who can make the top spin the longest wins.

Fangbao

Fang means square and *Bao* means

treasure. A "fangbao" is made of paper. Each person places one fangbao on the starting line. They hit each other's fangbao towards the finish line using their own fangbao. Players can keep any piece that passes the finish line. The loser is required to place a new fangbao at the start.

Play marbles

Dig a small hole. Players take turns knocking other players' marbles into the hole. If you knock someone else's marbles into the hole you get to keep them.

Hoop rolling

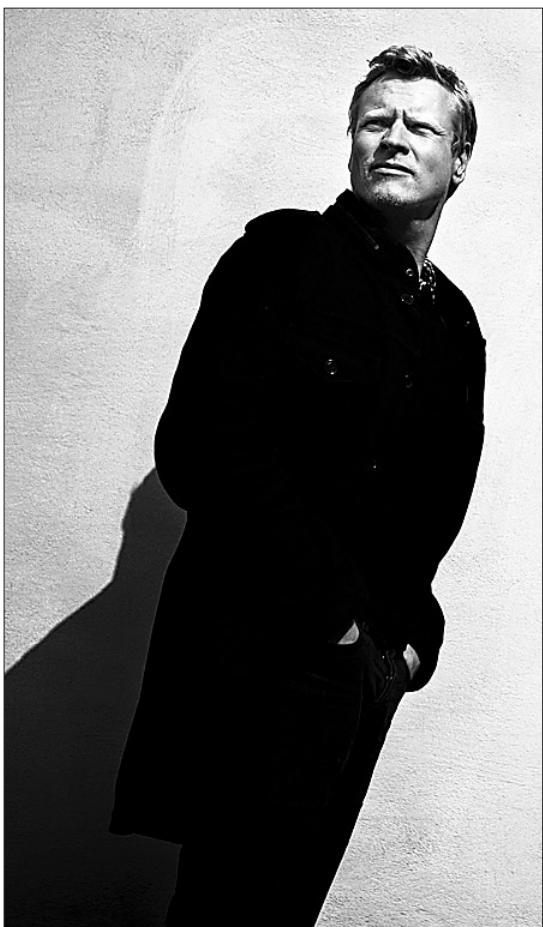
A large hoop made of steel is rolled using a stick. People can compete to see how long they can keep the hoop rolling.



Adults relive their childhood through the games.

CFP Photos

Forbidden City enveloped in jazzy notes



Emil de Waal's 'improvised' jazz

By Wang Yu

Though local articles call him "the drum king," 42-year-old Emil de Waal is also known as an electronic music composer who treats his computer like a member of his band. He plays with Gustaf Ljunggren and Søren Kjærgaard, but when it comes to composing, de Waal prefers to be on his own.

"I hate to compose with others," de Waal said. "Everyone has to agree with you, then you can move on." When he has an idea, de Waal said he wants to express it in his own way. He uses portions of previous recordings to weave together a new sound. "I just turn on my computer and drop the beats," he said.

De Waal began playing drums at age 9, and even then there was no doubt where his talents lay. At MAO Live House last Sunday, he played traditional pop and rock loops, jazz with separated drum fills – a more blaring, intense version of his performance at the Forbidden City Concert Hall the night before.

"I'd like my band to play in different ways," de Waal said.

The computer connected to his hip is what makes de Waal different from other drummers. He's usually busy fiddling with the sound system on a mixing console at the same time that he's attacking the drums. Computer-generated electronic melodies and the close, warm guitar tones from Ljunggren make Waal's music a child of digital and analog sound.

"To me, jazz is improvised, rhythmic music and as such, my music falls within that definition, but without the usual jazz rhythm," de Waal said. He has completely broken away from the rigid structures of many forms of solo jazz. Most of the audience at MAO liked de Waal's innovative sound and moved their bodies to the rhythm.

Besides playing in a band and composing music, de Waal's day job includes playing pop music on TV. "I don't want to do that all the time, but it's fun. I can keep the balance between it and my music, you know, like yin and yang," he said.

Listening to de Waal's recording is a different experience from watching him perform live. To ordinary listeners, his music is not all that "different" when he plays on stage. But it's another story when you hear his albums.

"Jazz is a new style that was born not even a hundred years ago, so it should be open. In my mind, jazz has to cover all musical elements," de Waal said.

Photo provided by Emil de Waal

By He Jianwei

Bass player Huang Yong established the Nine Gates Jazz Festival in 2006, a name that alludes to Beijing, which had nine gates in ancient times.

From May 22 to 27, more than 12 jazz bands from home and abroad regaled Beijing residents with classical jazz music at the Forbidden City Concert Hall. The five-day concert marked the first time Nine Gates collaborated with the London Jazz Festival.



Drawn to traditional Chinese melodies

By He Jianwei

On Monday, in a room backstage at the Forbidden City Concert Hall, a slim British cellist discussed chord arrangements with Chinese band members. Ayanne Witter-Johnson was collaborating with folk singer Xiao Juan for the first time.

As a composer, jazz vocalist, cellist and pianist, Witter-Johnson has been described "a flexible jazz-R&B prowess on vocals" by *Jazzwise* magazine, the UK's biggest-selling jazz monthly.

While still in London, Witter-Johnson was given four pieces by Chinese singers and asked to choose one of them. It was Xiao's traditional Chinese melodies that captivated her, she said. "I have seen interviews with Xiao Juan and I know she's a traditional person, so I decided to collaborate with her," the British musician said.

Through email, the two artists chose five songs, both in English and Chinese, to perform together. "Xiao Juan suggested 'Amazing Grace.' I agreed with her, but I didn't want to do it slow and I suggested we do it in bossa nova," Witter-Johnson said. She also picked Xiao's "Red Cloth and Green Flowers," a simple but melodious song.

The two initially wanted to include one of Witter-Johnson's songs, but ended up scrapping the plan. "My songs are more complicated and we didn't have much time to rehearse," Witter-Johnson said.

Witter-Johnson began playing the piano at five years old, and took up the cello at 14.

In 2007, she became an "emerging artist in residence" at London's Southbank Center. She landed the post after taking part in a project led by composer and instrumentalist Nitin Sawhney, who is acclaimed for combining Asian and world music with jazz and electronica. The project brought together a variety of artists to produce original material for a performance at the reopening of Southbank's Royal Festival Hall. Now, Witter-Johnson is regarded as a star of Britain's jazz world.

But her performance in Beijing gave her a first experience. Although Witter-Johnson has collaborated with other musicians in Britain, she has never sung with other artists. In her performance with Xiao, she sang harmony and baseline. Working with the Chinese folk singer has undoubtedly expanded her musical horizons.



Photos provided by Nine Gates Jazz Festival



Labels on music not welcome

By Wang Yu

The end of Bandapart's China tour with drummer Emil de Waal didn't signify "rest" it turned out. The three-member Danish band immediately jumped on stage at MAO Live House rock club and the Forbidden City Concert Hall.

The contrasting venues gave the group an opportunity to stretch their musical talent. Bandapart played more traditional jazz accompanied by a grand piano for the concert hall's older and wealthier audience.

At MAO, the members unleashed searing energy levels with their electric guitars, keyboard and synthesizers. They wowed club-goers with their keyboard's space echo effect, vibrating light overdrive guitar sound and sometimes broken drum beatings that emitted the quiet but powerful feel of alternative rock.

Bandapart was not afraid listeners would misunderstand their music style.

"Nobody taught us how to play. Even if they taught us, I don't think we would change anything. We have our music and we play the best way we feel in different venues because music is free, an organic free language, a way of expression which cannot be controlled," Søren Kjærgaard, the band's keyboard player, said.

The group was formed eight years ago, seven years after Kjærgaard and guitarist Jakob Bro met in a music conservatory in Denmark. Kjærgaard, Bandapart's creative leader, began studying classical piano at age 11, then later turned to musical styles such as funk and pop. The band's style also shows influences of Chicago Underground Duo and other post-rock artists.

"I understand why people like to put labels on music – because that's the way they understand it. But in the end, it's not about what it's called but how it sounds, what it makes you feel. Even rock music has so many directions," Kjærgaard said. "We don't talk about what to play or how to play. We go on stage and see what happens. That's like taking a risk but it keeps us alert," he said.

"You all have your own roles on stage and there are still some boundaries. But within that, we want to try to be as open as possible," Kjærgaard said.

Photo provided by Bandapart

By Wang Yu

Still remember the days when you slept beside your Transformers toys or Barbie dolls? As kids, we used to dream about becoming the hero or heroine of cartoons and fairytales – and toy figures became our connection to this amazing, magical world.

But not only children need toys.

Some grown-ups have never surrendered their passion for robots, cartoon characters and action figures – objects which fill their shelves at home or at work. If you're part of this group or are considering reliving your childhood, read on for shops that will make you jump for joy. These are also good gift ideas for Children's Day on June 1.

Dreams are alive

Cartoon characters, robots, action figures for adults (and children)

Linoli

Linoli, the Chinglish translation of "presents are not merely presents," is a store that lives up to its name. The shop on Gulou Dong Dajie is filled with interesting products like a soft bottle-shaped telephone and Homestar, a planetary system for home use by Japanese company Sega. Many pedestrians drop in, drawn by the shop's amusing products.

Linoli first established its presence online three years ago when its founders, Han Xuan and Liang Jing, were still in college. Han, who majored in Japanese language, got the inspiration to open the store while reading gadget information on a Japanese web site. Their first store was in Xidan, which also



Outside Linoli

(298 yuan), a battery-powered toy cannon that shoots foam bullets in two modes. Another customer favorite is the Super Soaker MAX water gun (160 yuan), which is rifle-shaped and can fire as far as 10 meters.

Also available at Linoli are quirky inventions like Bandai's Hex Bug remote bug robot (120 yuan) and Takara Tomy's Q-Street mini remote cars (99 yuan). In addition to toys, it currently has on special offer picture frames shaped like a person's body and human-shaped porcelain plant pots.

Lifeili

Where: 66 Guloudongdajie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 6601 7268
Open: 10 am – 10 pm
Web site: shop33282901.taobao.com/



Fireworks clock



Racing car

Remote-controlled robot
Photos by Song Nannan

They can be found in Shimao Jinyuan Mall (4th floor), Wangjing Jiamao Mall (4th floor) and the Beijing Zoo's Animal Restaurant.

Zhao Ying, 30, a manager of a consulting firm, gave her 5-year-old niece a *Swan Lake* DVD for her birthday. "She was amazed and captivated when she saw herself alongside the *Swan Lake* characters," said Zhao, who has a child of her own. "She thought she was really a movie star!"

81bian
Where: 4/F, Shimao Jinyuan Shopping Mall, 1 Yuanda Lu, Chaoyang District
Tel: 6129 3668
Open: 10 am – 8 pm
Web site: 81bian.com

Toy robots galore

Guanghui, located on Gulou Dong Dajie, has captivated the imagination of robot lovers for years. The shop sells a variety of models at comparatively cheap prices, including Transformers and the latest kinds of Gundam models.

On a street lined with dozens of small stores, Guanghui isn't easy to miss. Just look for a glass window with rows and rows of toy robots. Sunlight can barely stream in because of the products on display, and it appears to be the most cramped shop on the street.

Guanghui resembles a small warehouse more than a toy shop. The room is filled with floor-to-ceiling shelves and stacks of boxes, which only leave a narrow walkway for customers. Be careful when you take down toys or boxes; you don't want everything to come tumbling down on you.

Local fans of animation models are divided into two camps based on the works they love: Western or Japanese. Although Guanghui has Transformers, it clearly belongs to the latter group as seen in its far more abundant collection of anime



The room is filled with robots.

Photos by Song Nannan

beside the window, which showcases the latest trends from Japan. The shop owner, who is considered an expert in the field, can help reorder a product that's sold out.

Guanghui
Where: 66-2 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
Tel: 13581887713
Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Star of the show

If you're someone with a child, then here's some good news.

Kids love cartoon characters whether they're in books or

Be the hero of a cartoon show
Photo provided by 81bian.com

videos. Now, it's possible to make your child the star of the show – a one-of-a-kind gift to be cherished. 81bian.com will put your child in a cartoon video or storybook together with some of the world's most popular characters.

Available programs include *Swan Lake*, *Ultronman*, *Journey to the West* and popular children's music. Parents can order these personalized DVDs and story books through 81bian.com's Web site or kiosks in Beijing.

'World's No 1 Rigoletto' headlines Opera Festival

By He Jianwei

Italian baritone Leo Nucci, regarded as one of the most melodious voices in the opera world, will perform opera master Giuseppe Verdi's *Rigoletto* in the city next month.

The 67-year-old Nucci, among the top baritones of the 1980s and 90s, is particularly admired in his Verdi roles. He has played *Rigoletto* more than 400 times since he was 31, which earned him the title, "World's No. 1 Rigoletto."

The tragic play, created in 1851, is considered one of Verdi's three classics in his middle ages, along with *La Traviata* and *Trovatore*.

Set in the Italian city of Mantua in the 16th century, the opera stars Rigoletto, an ugly and hunchbacked jester in the palace of the Duke of Mantua. The young and

handsome Duke's main source of pleasure is flirting with women, which earns the court's disapproval.

But Rigoletto only mocks the court wives and daughters' misfortune — until his lovely and innocent daughter Gilda falls prey to the Duke. The nobleman disguises himself as a poor student and pursues Gilda until he wins her love.

Later, Rigoletto lures the Duke to a hotel with a beauty and hires an assassin to kill the libertine. At dawn, the jester finds out that Gilda had disguised herself as the Duke and lay dying; the young woman found out about her father's plot and was willing to sacrifice her life for the man she loved even though he didn't love her in return.

Verdi emphasizes the psychological changes the charac-



Giuseppe Verdi's Rigoletto

Where: Opera House of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District
When: June 18-21, 7:30 pm
Admission: 280-880 yuan; 1,080 yuan for VIP
Tel: 6650 0000

Upcoming

Exhibition

The Myth of Displacement — Li Wenfeng and Liu Linling Exhibition
Where: New Millennium Gallery, 3818 Warehouse, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: July 6-24, daily, 10 am - 7 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 6432 4122

Stage in June

Concert

2009 French Piano Festival
Beijing — Stephen Kovacevich Recital

Where: Forbidden City Concert Hall (inside Zhongshan Park), Dongcheng District
When: June 5, 7:30 pm
Admission: 30-380 yuan
Tel: 6559 8306

Windsbacher Knabenchor China Premiere

Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng District
When: June 6, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-380 yuan
Tel: 6831 6633

Wilderness

Who: China Opera and Dance Drama Theater

Where: Concert Hall of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 20, 7:30 pm
Admission: 80-480 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

Immortal Mendelssohn — Commemorating the 200th Anniversary of Felix Mendelssohn's Birth

Who: China National Opera House Symphony Orchestra

Where: Concert Hall of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 27, 7:30 pm
Admission: to be announced
Tel: 6655 0000

Dance

The Sounds of Yunnan

Who: Yang Liping, Xia Ga
Where: Poly Theater, 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: From June 6, 7:30 pm
Admission: 180-1,280 yuan
Tel: 5166 3124

Raymonda

Who: The Bayerische Staatsballett

Where: Opera House of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 24-26, 7:30 pm
Admission: to be announced
Tel: 6655 0000

Dream Variations — Collected Programmes

Who: The Bayerische Staatsballett

Where: Opera House of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 27, 7:30 pm
Admission: to be announced
Tel: 6655 0000

Opera

Verdi's Rigoletto

Where: Opera House of the National Centre for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: June 18-21, 7:30 pm
Admission: 280-1,080 yuan
Tel: 6655 0000

(By Jackie Zhang)

5 Friday, May 29

Exhibition

The Grace of Printmaking



Where: Amelie Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Until June 12, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9698

Song Myung Jin Solo Painting Exhibition

Where: Space I, Gallery Art-side, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Until June 14, daily except Monday, 10 am - 7 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9192

Nightlife

Arrows Made of Desire

Where: MAO Live House, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 9 pm
Admission: 80 yuan (includes a CD)
Tel: 6460 5512

The Verse

Where: Jiangjinjiu bar, 2 Zhongku Hutong (next to Gulou), Dongcheng District
When: 9:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 8405 0124

Videhi

Where: Jiahu bar, 7 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 9:45 pm
Admission: 30 yuan
Tel: 6401 4611

6 Saturday, May 30

Exhibition

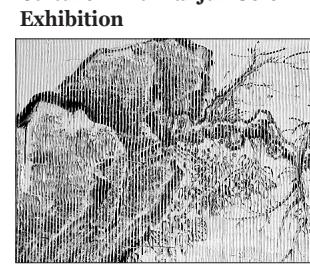
Magic of Thinking

This solo exhibition consists of 20 of Hua Qing's latest canvases and sculptures, along with a two-meter high installation unveiled to the public for the first time. Having explored human origins and society in his earlier works, Hua now seeks to probe more philosophical questions about humanity.

Where: Asia Art Center, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until July 28, daily except Monday, 10 am - 6:30 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 5978 9709

Developing Chinese Local Culture — Liu Hanjun Solo Exhibition



Where: Jiushi Space, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: Until June 25, daily except Monday, 11 am - 6 pm
Admission: Free
Tel: 8456 0467

Nightlife

Children's Songs Party

Where: MAO Live House, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 8:30 pm
Admission: 40 yuan
Tel: 5900 0969

111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 9 pm
Admission: 60 yuan
Tel: 6460 5512

RandomK(e) + Comb(o) + Red Hand Jazz Band + Columbia University Jazz Band

Where: D-22 bar, 242 Chengfu Lu, Haidian District
When: 10 pm
Admission: 30 yuan
Tel: 6265 3177

Thumb Girl

Where: Weibozhiyan club, 2308 (3/F) North Tower, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: 2009 pm
Admission: to be announced
Tel: 6655 0000

Thumb Girl

Where: Weibozhiyan club, 2308 (3/F) North Tower, SOHO Shangdu, 8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
When: 8:30 pm
Admission: 40 yuan
Tel: 5900 0969

Tel: 8403 9807

Movie

The Obscure & Blade vs Blade — Two movies by Lu Le

Where: Yugongyishan, 2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 8 pm
Admission: 60 yuan; 30 yuan for students
Tel: 6404 2711

Nightlife

Dirty Party

- AMU Release Party

Where: MAO Live House, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 9:30 pm
Admission: 50 yuan; 60 yuan (includes a CD)
Tel: 6402 5080

Stories from a Life in China

Where: Penghao Theater, 35 Dongmianhua Hutong, Jiaodaokou Nan Dajie, Dongcheng District
When: 8 pm
Admission: 80 yuan
Tel: 13070166260

7 Sunday, May 31

Exhibition

Crossroads — Chen Jiagang Solo Photography Exhibition

The exhibition presents a journey from East to West, from past to present, through two series of photographs depicting the vast landscapes of Xinjiang Province and the Silk Road.

Where: Paris-Beijing Photo Gallery I, 798 Art Dis-



Crossroads

Kidney trouble may begin with medicine

By Zheng Lu

A recent survey of 17 clinics in Shanghai showed that almost a third of all cases of acute renal failure were caused by drug abuse. And most of the afflicted were senior citizens with common ailments. The survey found amino glycosides, cephalosporin antibiotics, diuretics and contrast medium were the most likely to cause renal toxicity.

The survey was carried out by the Nephrology Department at Yan Chai Hospital, attached to the Shanghai Jiaotong University School of Medicine. Doctors collected data on acute renal failure patients during the last two years. When analyzing the results, the department said drugs played a role in the failure as often as 29 percent of the time.

Others were those with chronic kidney trouble and the old. Nearly half of the drugs which caused renal failure were antibiotics, followed by diuretics and contrast mediums.

The researchers say that as medicine develops, drugs like antibiotics enter use only following minimal clinical testing. But because the kidney is so good at repairing itself, damage is hard to see in the early stages. That delay in diagnosis caused many patients to miss the treatment window, and only saw a doctor once it was irreversible.

Taking too high a dose of medicine for too long was the primary cause of renal failure. Patients should be very careful to use medicine only when directed and never in excess. Two or more drugs that may cause renal toxicity should never be taken at once.

High risk groups were people with cerebrovascular disease, diabetes, hypertension or coronary heart disease. Patients taking medication for these conditions should go in for frequent kidney checks: early detection is the key to avoiding a lifetime of dialysis. Symptoms include soreness around the waist, abnormal urine, swelling in the limbs and increased blood pressure. If you are suddenly experiencing any of these, stop taking your medicine and go for a kidney check.

Healthy people cannot sit back and relax. Due to modern work pressures, many people are taxing their bodies beyond the point of recovery. It will catch up with them as they reach middle age, and around that time kidney function may drop off and premature ageing may begin.

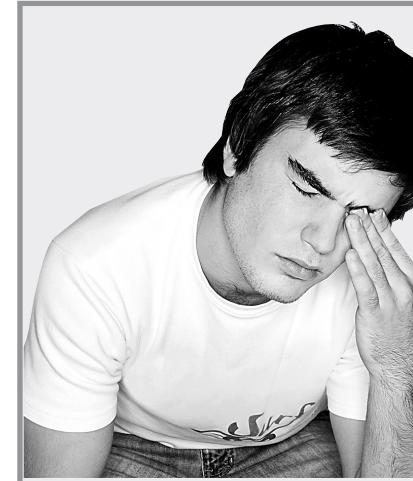
"Take precaution before it is too late," Sun Zhenhe, a nephropathy doctor at Beijing Zhongyan Hospital, says. Patients with high blood pressure and diabetes should pursue active treatment to prevent chronic kidney failure. "Drugs which are toxic to the kidney should be avoided." Sun says antibiotics and some other drugs could worsen the kidney's function, and that those who use the medicines frequently should go in for kidney checks. A low-protein, low-phosphorus and low-fat diet can protect renal function. "Lamb spine soup is good for people with a weak kidney," Sun says. He also said porridge should be part of a balanced diet.

Physical activity also helps to maintain kidney health. "Joints and muscles are all controlled by the liver and kidney," Sun says.

Sports like strolling, jogging and tai-chi can help keep the body strong and the kidneys healthy.



CFP Photos



Season for pink eye is here

By Zheng Lu

Summer is here and it's the season for swimming. But this year, remember to use eyedrops every day to keep your eyes clear.

Pink eye, an epidemic disease, becomes pandemic every three to five years. There were few reported cases the last two years, so ophthalmologists suggest swimmers take precautions. Since May, there has been limited precipitation and quickly escalating temperatures, creating an environment in which pink eye can thrive.

Pink eye is the common name for the infectious conjunctivitis, a contagious eye infection in which the eyes of the patient may turn red and be sensitive to light. The main cause is an adenovirus infection. People become infected by touching the tears and eye secretions of someone with pink eye. Towels and pillows are common mediums of the disease: sometimes even eyedrops used by a patient can become an infective agent.

Since a high temperature is the chief factor of the pink eye epidemic, basic knowledge of eye care is important. "People should wash their hands frequently and avoid touching their eyes," says Wang Junfeng, an ophthalmologist at Beijing Friendship Hospital. She says people should pay attention to sanitation of daily articles, like towels, which may come in contact with their eyes. "Towels should be washed often," Wang says. People who work nights are more vulnerable to the disease because the lack of sleep leaves the eyes sore and open to germs, Wang says.

Eating fried and oily foods as well as high-protein seafood during summer can leave the whole body susceptible to viral attacks. "It is good to drink more water and eat a variety of vegetables," Wang says.

However, do not be paranoid when you are seeing red. Lots of things can cause people's eyes to turn red, and few of them are infectious conjunctivitis. It might just be the effects of working late. The earlier stage of acute iridocyclitis may also cause some people's eyes to redden. The doctor said anyone who suspects they have pink eye should go to the hospital for diagnosis. Attempts to self-medicate may cause one to miss the best window for treatment. Wang also says people who wear contact lenses should switch to glasses if they find their eyes red or sore.

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Health

BEIJING TODAY Editor: Li Zixin Designer: Yang Gen

Revelation of wartime secrets

Yu Zecheng (right) and Wang Cuiping, a pretend couple, eventually fell in love in Qianfu. CFP Photo



Tianjin sites featured on TV spy drama Qianfu

By Zhang Dongya

For months, a local spy series called *Qianfu* (Secret Agents) monopolized televisions during prime time. Besides TV's loyal middle-aged viewers and cloak-and-dagger aficionados, the drama was followed by young people who previously could not be pried away from online gaming. Fans said they saw in the story faith; some, loyalty; while others, true love.

After finishing the series, set in Tianjin from 1945 to 1949, many viewers were inspired to learn more about that historical period and to visit the sites that appeared on TV. Some of the places are well-preserved but have been converted for other use, while others have been sealed up. No matter whether these buildings are open to visitors or not, each has its own story to tell about a turbulent period.

Agent of Kuomintang's CIA

Qianfu was adapted from a novel of the same name by Tianjin author Long Yi. The story begins in 1945, soon after China won the Sino-Japanese War and civil war broke out between the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the Kuomintang (KMT) nationalist party.

The lead character, Yu Zecheng, was a CPC secret agent operating behind enemy lines. Yu worked at Juntong, a KMT agency in charge of intelligence operations, which functioned much like the US's Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). He was stationed in Juntong's Tianjin office, in which the drama revolved.

Yu was originally a loyal KMT member, but had a change of heart when he saw its intense corruption, which made him realize the party would not go far. Once Yu switched sides, the CPC assigned him the dangerous task of stealing information and weakening the enemy by all means necessary, including murder.

Juntong was later reorganized into the KMT's Secrecy Bureau, and Yu was promoted as deputy director of its Tianjin bureau. This made him one of the highest-level communist spies inside the nationalist party.

Yu's story was inspired by real-life individuals, including a man called Hu Di, director of the Great Wall Agency in Tianjin, an information organization established by the KMT.

The office for Tianjin's Juntong, which later became the Secrecy Bureau, was situated at 43 Linsen Road. The road has been renamed Xinhua, but its 1940s two-floor buildings are still around.

Residences with a leading role

Besides Yu's office, his residence and the residence of Juntong's director Wu Jingzhong were two other important places in the TV series.

Yu and another female spy, alias Wang Cuiping, pretended to be a couple to avoid detection. At the time, the KMT profiled undercover CPC agents as "a single man with a single bed in a rented room," so Yu's "wife" was a ploy to deflect suspicions.

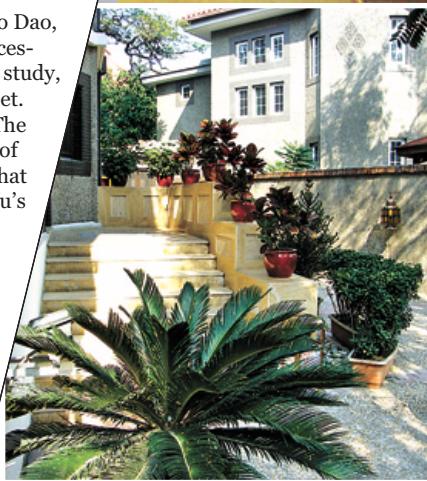
Yu lived in a two-story apartment on Aidingbao Dao, or Edinburgh Avenue, in Tianjin's old British Concession. The first floor contained a sitting room and a study, while the upper floor had a big bedroom and a toilet.

Aidingbao Dao is now called Chongqing Dao. The road is lined with many two-floor buildings, most of them commercial establishments. But it appears that one of the few apartments there was turned into Yu's residence in the soap opera.

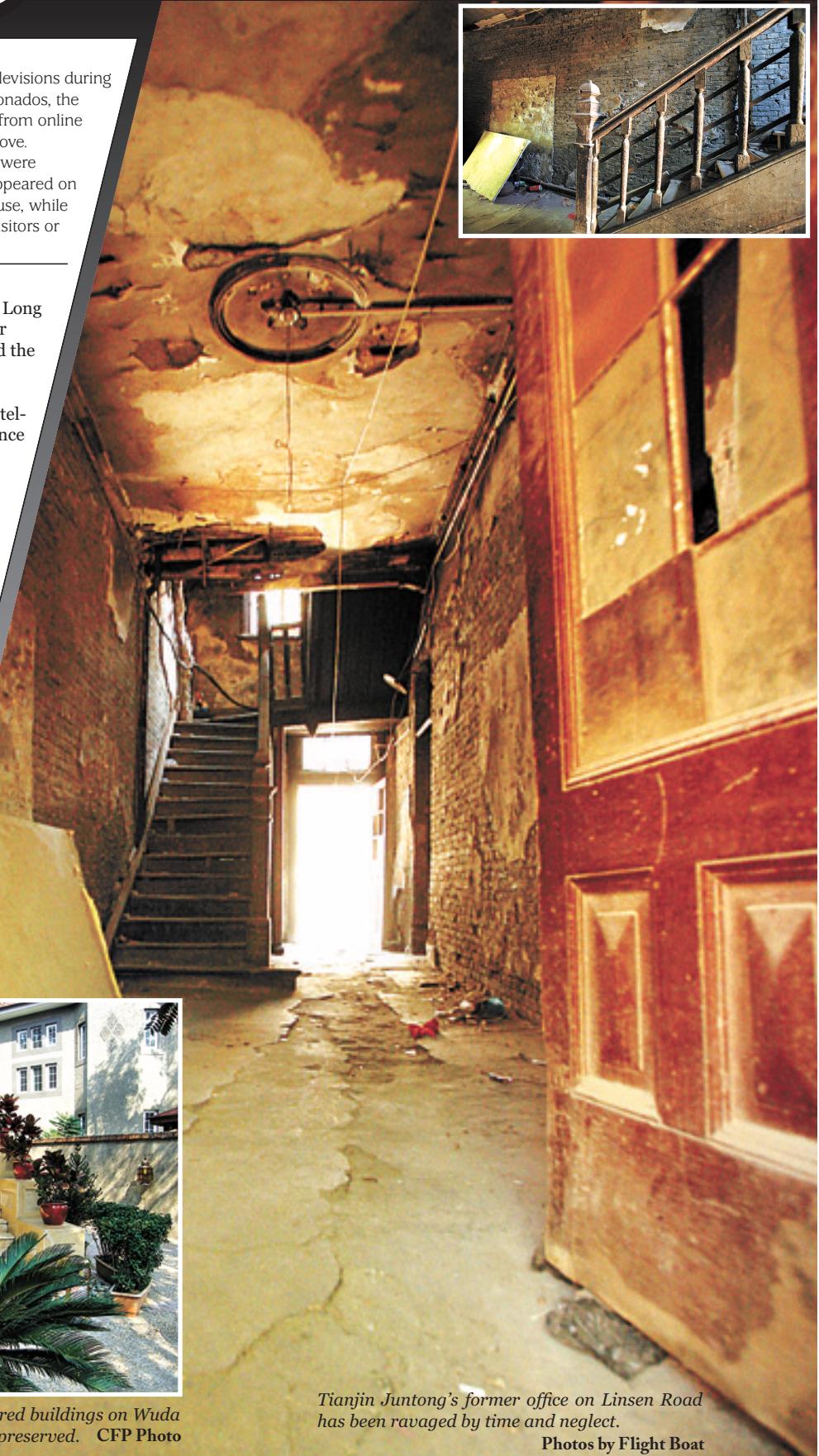
It was at director Wu's house that he and Yu discussed official affairs. That was also where Yu's "wife" Wang stole secrets while playing mahjong with Mrs. Wu.

The Wus' house was a three-level apartment at 1 Changde Dao, also in the British Concession. Changde Dao is a block away from Chongqing Dao, which means it would have only taken Mrs. Yu several minutes to walk to the Wus'.

Continued on page 21...

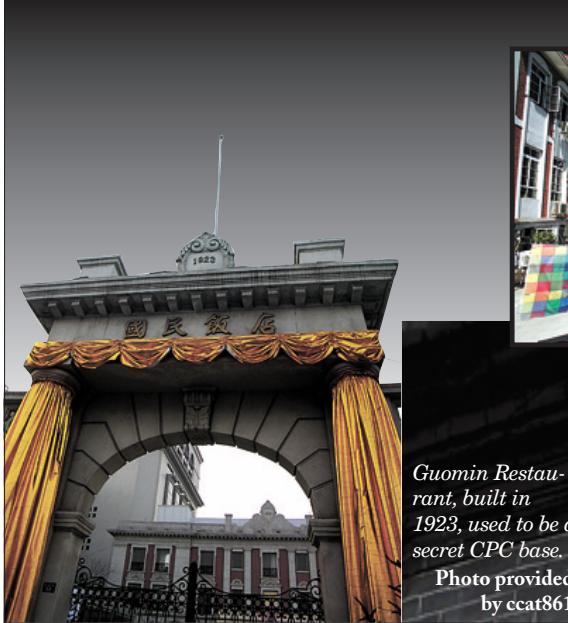


Some old West-inspired buildings on Wuda Dao have been well-preserved. CFP Photo



Tianjin Juntong's former office on Linsen Road has been ravaged by time and neglect.

Photos by Flight Boat



Guomin Restaurant, built in 1923, used to be a secret CPC base. Photo provided by ccat861

... continued from page 20

CPC's undercover bases

In the drama, Juntong assassinated a traitor named Li Haifeng. Li's character was based on Zhang Jingyao, a KMT traitor who was killed in Beijing in 1933. Juntong also killed many progressives at that time; one of them was Ji Hongchang, a well-known general in the War of Resistance Against Japan. Ji was arrested at Guomin Restaurant in Tianjin and later killed in Beijing.

Guomin, built in 1923, is located at 58 Chifeng Dao. The three-story building in Western design served as a gathering place and hotel for the city's upper class during the Republican Period (1912-1949). In 1924, the republic's former president Sun Yat-sen lodged there and held meetings with government leaders Feng Yuxiang and Duan Qirui.

Few knew that Guomin was also a secret base for the communists. From 1936 to 1937, a CPC intelligence exchange station was set up in the building, in a room disguised as a bookstore.

The building has been well-preserved and is considered one of the period's representative architectures. However, it is not open to the public.

In the TV series, undercover agents met with their superiors in places like drugstores and bookstores. A printing house in Tianjin, at 47 Tangshan Dao, served the same purpose in real life.

Mao Zemin, brother of Chairman Mao Zedong, set up the second-floor printing press using the pseudonym Zhou Yunhua. To the world, the group was printing religious materials like the Bible and New Testament passages, but secretly, they were churning out revolutionary materials.

The building has become a product of neglect: it is dim and feels cramped because of objects that have piled up over the years. The yard has five gates, designed as convenient escape paths in case of an emergency. Only a tablet that reads "The CPC central secret printing plant in Tianjin" tells people of the crucial role this place played in wartime.

Scattered, hidden KMT stations

During the War of Resistance Against Japan, the KMT began setting up scores of secret radio stations for communications and intelligence operations. Two of the most important were Shuiheng Station in Tianjin and Wangxiao Station in Singapore.

Shuiheng, on the second floor of the Building 20 at Baohua Li in the British Concession, was established by a KMT secret agent of the same name. The road is lined with old two-story buildings and is near the intersection of Xinhua Road and Yingkou Road.

In 1946, the Tianjin Juntong founded the Zhongyi Society, a support organization for intelligence operations. The society set up its office on Baohua Li, then later moved to Shoude Building, close to Xinhua Road. In the same year, another intelligence office was opened on Shude Li, located at the intersection of Harbin Road and Xinhua Road.

Another secret location was the residence of Wang Tianmu, the first director of Tianjin's Juntong and a key leader of the nationalist party. The three-floor building had a European-style courtyard designed by Yan Ziheng, a renowned modern Tianjin architect. It was at 57 Dali Dao, one of Tianjin's five avenues.

The building now houses a restaurant serving Tanjia cuisine, one of the official cuisines of the late Qing Dynasty. On an exterior wall is a tablet that reads, "Old Residence of Wang." It describes Wang as "one of the most important persons in modern Chinese history," but his full name is not even given.

Everyday, the restaurant opens its doors to hordes of diners from near and far. But few know that decades ago there lived here a heavyweight of the nationalist party.



Buildings on Chongqing Dao



A residence on Shude Li that used to be a KMT intelligence office



One of the KMT's most important secret radio stations was on Baohua Li.

Photos by Flight Boat

Tiny cafe boasts big, varied tastes

By Jackie Zhang

Cottage Pizza and Cafe is owned by a young couple who serve up a great variety of pizzas from the small interior.

Li Wei, the wife, is the chef. She creates the pizzas and everything else on the menu. She was the one who suggested opening the restaurant. "I had many years of experience working chain pizza restaurants and that's where I learned to make pizza," Li says. "But when you are working for other people, you can only follow orders — there is no room for creativity."

She quit her job to open Cottage in 2004. "I can test all kinds of flavors and improve on them here. There are no limits or rules in cooking. It gives me a chance to always come up with new pizzas to satisfy guests, so my work is very fulfilling," she says.

At Cottage, pizzas and coffee are the two most popular items on the menu. "The Cottage Pizza and the Super Supreme Pizza are our most ordered," Li says. "We use a variety of toppings like pork, beef, corn, chicken, fruit, ham and cheese." Many of the foreign guests come for the coffee.

Cottage serves almost every variant of java, from mocha to espresso and French vanilla latte.

Women love the interior as much as the food. The decorations are romantic, cozy and reminiscent of the European countryside. The walls are painted a light yellow, and the color makes people feel happy when they come in for a bite.

The sofas and tables have flower-patterned covers. The lampshades and curtains are lace, and ornaments like plants, dolls and paintings dot every corner.

"People guess the decorations were my idea, but

they were actually chosen by my husband," Li says. Her husband majored in architecture at university. When they opened the restaurant, Li was in charge of food, and her husband took care of decoration, interior design and furniture.

"The atmosphere is warm and comfortable. I feel at home whenever I eat here," a female guest said. "I like the flowery tablecloths and the lace curtains. It is a wonderful place for girls."

Cottage Pizza & Cafe

Where: 17-2 Nanluoguxiang,

Dongcheng District

Open: noon-11 pm
(Monday to Friday), noon-midnight (weekend)

Tel: 8404 0378



Photo by Li Shaolin

Authentic Taiwan food hidden in hutong



By Jackie Zhang

Zuihonglou is another restaurant run by a couple in Nanluoguxiang. Wang Ang and his wife are the owners of the Taiwanese restaurant, as well as the cooks.

Taiwan food has become popular the last few years, especially when on the go. Beijing locals looking for good Taiwanese food are less demanding than Taiwan natives. Most guests at Taiwanese restaurants are frequent visitors who live and work in Beijing, but miss the taste of home.

Luroufan, braised pork with steamed rice, is one typical dish. It is common, but a good starter to test whether a restaurant's food is authentic. "Luroufan is quite popular, but the top dish is our beef noodles," Wang's wife says. "Every day we sell only 20 bowls of noodles because the beef we use is from a specific part of the cow, and

its quantity is limited. If you want the noodles, you have to place your order a day in advance."

Oyster omelets are another popular Taiwan snack. They are made from oyster, pork and caraway seed. The omelets are eaten with sweet and spicy jam. "If you want to know what authentic Taiwanese food tastes like, you should try the oyster omelets," she says.

Many of the juices and beers are shipped in from Taiwan.

Zuihonglou used to be in Nanluoguxiang, but space was limited. Customers complained about not having anywhere to talk and drink. That was when Wang moved his restaurant to the Mao'er Hutong. "This place is much bigger, and we were able to add a second floor just for people who come for the beer and wine," Wang says.

Wang's wife said they opened

the restaurant on a whim. "We had a trip in Beijing three years ago and we visited Nanluoguxiang. My husband loved the area, so he closed down his restaurant in Shanghai and moved here." The couple did not hire anyone when they started the restaurant three years ago. Both he and his wife handle all the food and other work at the restaurant.

The Wang family considers Zuihonglou more home than restaurant: So do many of their customers. "Most of them are from Taiwan. When they come and eat their hometown favorites, they feel like they have gone back," Wang's wife says.

Zuihonglou

Where: 39 Mao'er Hutong,

Dongcheng District

Open: noon – midnight

Average cost: 50 yuan

Tel: 6400 9704

Ya Bar, a local taste of Europe

By Venus Lee

Ya Bar & Cafe, named after its hostess, is a tranquil and homey place known for its light music, comfortable sofas, pearl-bead curtain, light purple drapery and books of Chinese Tang and Song poems.

The bar was opened by a young brother and sister who studied abroad in France. The two wanted to provide a place where the foreign backpackers could find something reminiscent of home, and where returning Chinese students could remember their Euro trips. "Actually, sitting on the sofa and drinking a cup of coffee while bathed in the sunshine gives a feeling like you are in Europe," Wang Jingya, the sister, said.

A placard above the window says "Oui, on parle français! Yes,

we speak English!" The bilingual notice plate attracts many foreign travelers who drop by to ask for directions or have a drink to rest.

The fanciest here are cocktails mixed by the owners. "When in Love, Ocean's Heart, L'Amour and Endless Love



are popular with lovers," Wang said, "While Blue Sunday is the office workers' favorite on Mondays."

What's interesting is there is no waiter or waitress at the bar. The brother and sister serve

guests in person. "We don't need a waiter or waitress, because that will make our bar into just another bar, no feeling of home." They greet visitors personally, like new friends. "We understand expats feel strange in a new country, because that's how we felt. So we just provide them a place where they can share happiness, share secrets and cry," she says.

Frequent visitors have become their friends. Some guests help the hosts to serve drinks at peak hours. "That is the point of the cafe. Everyone takes part in running the bar, from decoration to service," she says.

Ya Bar

Where: 139-1 Nanluoguxiang,

Dongcheng District

Open: 9 am – 2 am next day

Average cost: 40 yuan

Tel: 6407 7003



Photos by Li Zhixin

A restaurant and bar to linger



Photos by Li Zhixin



By Venus Lee

One look at Passby Bar is enough to tell you it's a traveler's hangout: scattered around the place are maps, travel magazines, straw sandals, a horsewhip and landscape photos of Tibet. One wall is covered with messages left by visitors from all over the globe. It shouldn't be a surprise then that the bar-cum-restaurant, located in a courtyard house in Nanluoguxiang, is owned by a Chinese couple who are avid travelers.

In summer, the courtyard is crawling with bottle gourd and luffa, which give the place an idyllic feel, coupled with light music in the background and rays of sunlight permeating through the roof windows. In the evening, customers can have dinner on the terrace and watch people going to and fro the popular tourist area.

Hai Yan, one of the owners, said the bar's atmosphere goes through a transformation throughout the day because of its customers. People who come in the morning are usually in a good mood, she said, and bring a breath of fresh air. At 11 am, lunchtime diners begin streaming in; some stay for the afternoon to chat or do some work. When these guests leave, the courtyard suddenly becomes quiet and lonely, like a solitary person. "I can see life's ups and downs reflected in the restaurant," Hai said.

Passby has a very Chinese look but serves Italian food — a reflection of its East-West theme. Its pizzas have received positive reviews over the years, especially its Hutong Pizza and Kungpao Chicken Pizza. The former contains marinated cubes of grilled lamb and cheese, while the latter is an adaptation of the popular Kungpao Chicken — diced chicken with red pepper and peanuts. The restaurant's avocado and cheese salad is very popular as it can go with any pizza.

Asian dishes are of course on the menu. There's samosa, an Indian snack of deep-fried curried potato; nasi, an Indonesian dish made with fried rice and egg; chicken teriyaki, grilled chicken flavored with sake and teriyaki sauce; and stewed lamb served with couscous, dried fruit and sour cream, a favorite Middle Eastern dish.

Guests can do a little shopping before or after their meal. In the courtyard is a shop that sells T-shirts and some knickknacks.

Passby Bar

Where: 108 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 11 am – 2 am next day

Cost: 60 yuan per person

Tel: 8403 8004

Where to find Beijing Today

Cottage Pizza & Cafe

Where: 17-2 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: noon – 11 pm (Monday to Friday); noon – midnight (weekend)

Tel: 8404 0378

Downtown Backpacker Accommodation

Where: 85 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 24 hours for check-in, but reservation needed

Tel 8400 2429

Downtown Backpacker Cafe

Where: 85 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 2 am next day

Tel: 6401 8792

Fish Nation

Where: 31 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 9:30 am – 1 am next day

Tel: 6401 3249

Luogudongtian

Where: 102 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – midnight

Tel: 8402 4729

Passby

Where: 108 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 2 am next day

Tel: 8403 8004

Qing Zhu Yuan

Where: 113 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 8 am – midnight

Tel: 6401 3961

Salud Bar

Where: 66 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 3 pm – until last guest leaves

Tel: 6402 5086

Taste

Where: 106 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 11 am – 2 am next day

Tel: 6401 7029

Vulcan Bar

Where: 143 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – until last guest leaves

Tel: 8404 0561

Xiao Xin's Cafe

Where: 103 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open 9:30 am – midnight

Tel: 6403 6956

Ya Bar

Where: 139-1 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 9 am – 2 am next day

Tel: 6407 7003

Zha Zha Cafe

Where: 101 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District

Open: 9:30 am – 2 am next day

Tel: 8402 4851

Zuihonglou

Where: 39 Mao'er Hutong, Dongcheng District

Open: noon – midnight

Tel: 6400 9704

(By Jackie Zhang)

East and West meet in a hutong

By Zheng Lu

When you stroll down Nanluoguxiang's main street, you will not miss Taste. Beckoning to diners is a big sign with Chinese characters Zamo, the verb "to taste" in the Beijing dialect.

The restaurant is located in a courtyard house with a ground floor over a meter above the ground, so it's conspicuously higher than other establishments along the street. The house's historical background explains its distinction from other buildings in the neighborhood.

The house, built in 1927, belonged to a grandson of Prince Gongqinwang, an uncle of the last Qing emperor Puyi. In those days, no houses in hutong areas were allowed to have a high foundation or to build a second floor. But the house was made an exception because of the owner's royal status. It became the largest and most notable residence in the neighborhood.

"It's a government-protected cultural relic, so we didn't change the house's framework. We only made some minor renovations," Yu Bin, the restaurant manager, said.

The house's inside stairs, beams and windows have kept their original look; they have only been given a fresh coat of paint. The main hall retains its Chinese flavor with big decorative knots and wooden tables and chairs. Designers partitioned the first floor into several private dining rooms; the four small rooms can seat two to four people,



Photo provided by Taste

while the three big ones are meant for groups of 10 or more.

Taste's dishes blend Chinese and Western ingredients and cooking methods, Yu said. The restaurant specializes in Kungpao Chicken Pizza, which has spicy diced chicken, peanuts and cucumber under a layer of cheese. This is one dish that loyal customers don't tire of.

Spicy lamb pizza and Kungpao French-style snails are other samples of Taste's fusion cuisine.

The restaurant's second floor, which can hold as many as 40 people, is an ideal place to hold a conference or an engagement ceremony. Exclusive use of the place costs

2,000; if a buffet is included, the price starts at 3,000 yuan.

The building has a balcony with four tables — a great place for a romantic dinner or a chat with a good



friend over a leisurely drink. Here, you'll be at the top of the Nanluoguxiang world. Taste Where: 106 Nanluoguxiang, Dongcheng District Open: 11 am – 2 am next day Average cost: 60 yuan Tel: 6401 7029

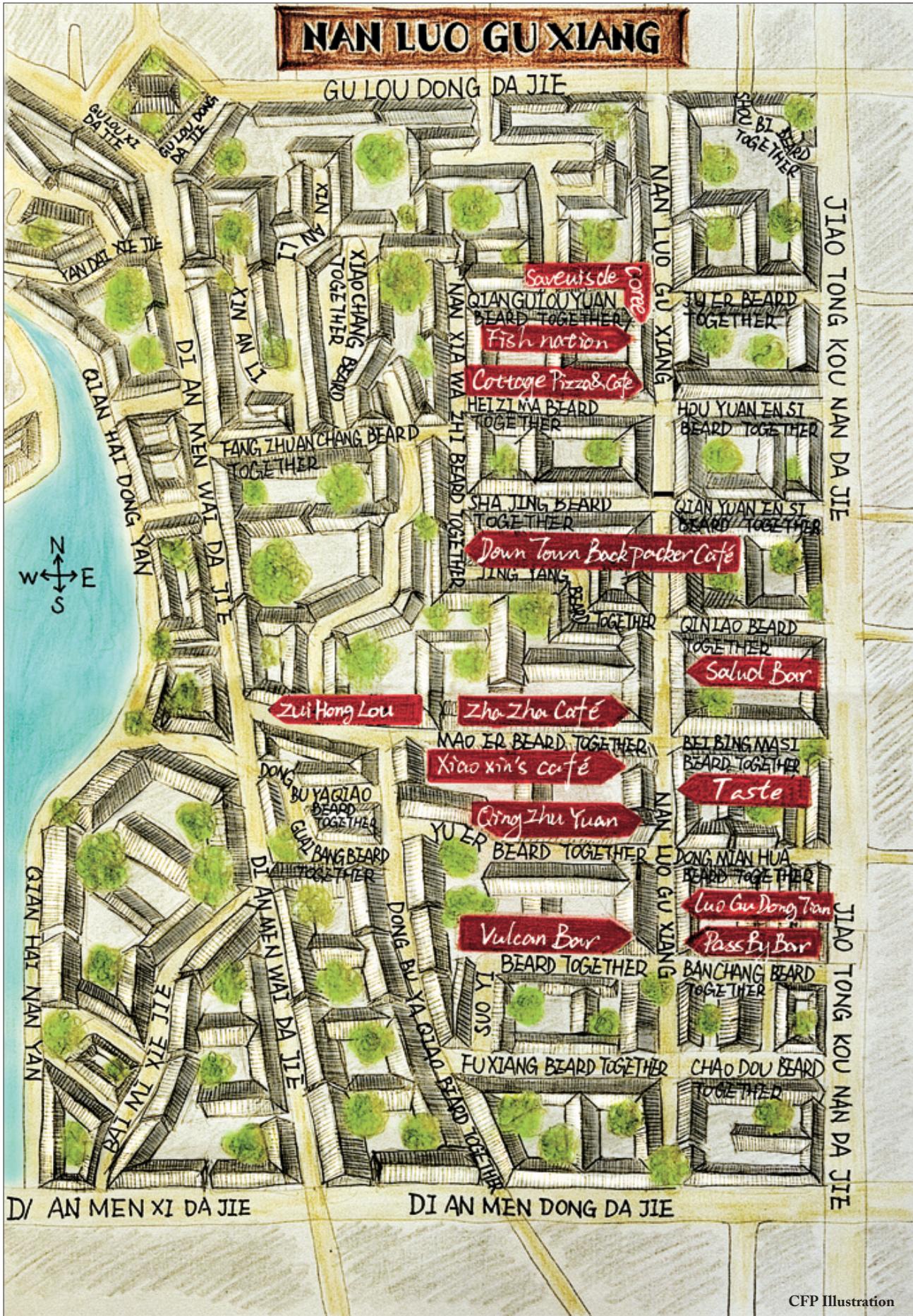
Updated maps for your entertainment guide

By Jackie Zhang

Beijing Today ran a map series in summer 2007 that introduced dining, shopping, entertainment and night life in all the areas popular in the expat scene.

Two years later, the landscape has changed. Many restaurants have closed, and some new bars and shops have opened. From this month on, *Beijing Today* will provide monthly updates to its map series to provide readers with the latest information.

Find something new in Nanluoguxiang



By Jackie Zhang

Nanluoguxiang is one of the oldest of the city's 25 protective areas. Because of media coverage and cameos in many movies and TV dramas, it has become popular with young people. Since it's also a place to see ancient Beijing architectures, foreigners choose it as an all-in-one tourist destination.

Nanluoguxiang is at the west end of Dongcheng District and covers a square kilometer. The *hutong* in this area are relics of the Yuan Dynasty (1267-1368). At that time, the east part of Nanluoguxiang area was called Zhaohuifang and the west was Jinggongfang. The street between the two parts was Nanluoguxiang.

In Ming (1368-1644) and Qing (1636-1912) dynasties, it was the residential area for rich people like nobles, artists and writers. Many of its 1,000 courtyards were once home to someone famous.

There are eight hutong on each side of Nanluoguxiang, including Yu'er, Mao'er and Heizima Hutong. The area looks like a centipede, with Nanluoguxiang the body and its 16 hutong as the legs.

It is the best-preserved chessboard-style courtyard area in Beijing. It's like a residential museum. In every hutong, you can see different styles of brick-carving, archways, screen walls and other kinds of *Siheyuan* architecture.

Nanluoguxiang has attracted many cafes, restaurants, bars, workshops and stores. At present, there are over 100 stores and restaurants in the area.

Some people say Sanlitun area is colorful, Houhai is red and Nanluoguxiang is green; it's not only because of the natural color of the areas, but also because of the different culture and history. Every hutong here has its own relics, so come and explore Beijing's history!